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NOTES OF THE WEEK

The Attorney-General's speech in the Dump debate, shows how difficult it is for a lawyer to put himself into the skin of the House of Commons as a collective personality. Sir Frederick Banbury and his committee on National Expenditure have done very good work, for which citizens of all parties are grateful. It is absurd for the Attorney-General to attack Sir Frederick Banbury because every statement in his report might not be substantiated in a court of law. Statements in the Houses of Parliament or in their Committees are privileged, because free criticism is one of their most important functions, and free criticism must often make statements which, though true, could not be proved in a law court. For the same reason "fair comment" is allowed as a defence to a libel action. Unless the comment is recklessly false, or dictated by a sinister interest, it is recognised as the performance of a duty. Whether the Leyland Motor Company bought the St. Omer dump too cheaply it is almost impossible to decide. But Government officials and Crown lawyers have no business to abuse people who say that the Leyland Motor Company got the better of the Government. And Mr. Hope and Sir Gordon Hewitt may rage never so furiously, the fact that Colonel Spurrier acted for the Government seller, and that two of his brothers were on the Board of Leylands, the buyers, is a very ugly one.

It is characteristic of present-day legislation that the Government does not proclaim martial law in Ireland. In martial law are two ugly words, which savour of militarism, and are unacceptable to the trade unionists and other anarchists, who now call the tune. Accordingly, the Restoration of Order in Ireland Bill is introduced, which substitutes trial by court-martial for trial by jury in criminal and civil cases. The military tribunals may also, under regulations made by the Lord Lieutenant, take the place of courts of summary

jurisdiction, and of the coroner and his jury. Still, it is not martial law, oh dear no: but it is, we are glad to say, a tolerably good imitation of it. Prisoners convicted may also be sent for incarceration to any prison in England or Scotland. A high military authority is, we learn, in favour of the stew-in-their-own-juice policy. But it is too great a risk.

The most remarkable fact about Sinn Fein is that it is a movement without a leader. De Valera, a Spanish-American Papist or Jew, never was a leader, and is now a back number. Is that prating, meddlesome priest, Dr. Mannix, a candidate for the post? If so, he will have to unfrock himself, for the Vatican has already disowned him. Is it possible that an unfrocked priest could ever lead a national movement in Ireland? If so, the hours of the Roman Church are numbered. We wonder whether the Duke of Northumberland and Sir Edward Carson are right in saying that Bolshevism is at the bottom of Sinn Fein. Mr. Lloyd George only half accepted this explanation of what he called "a squalid conspiracy." If the Prime Minister wants to strengthen the armed forces of the Crown, the first thing he must do is to secure the future of the Constabulary and the police. How can the constables and the police be expected to act with courage and promptitude when in a few years' time they may find themselves handed over to the mercy of a Sinn Fein Government?

Regularly, at intermittent periods, there is an uprising of physical-force anarchists against property and law. The cries are always the same: property is theft, and law is tyranny. These volcanic eruptions generally last about ten years, and then subside under the persistent and irresistible weight of property and law. Jacobinism lasted about ten years, from 1779 to 1789. The revolutionary movement of 1848 was suppressed in three years by Louis Napoleon and Metternich: the proletariat was not ready for it. Parnellism

MOTOR—WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION ACT,—FIRE, ETC.

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lasted about ten years, from 1880 to 1890. Sovietism has lasted three years, and will probably run its course for several years **more**, and then disappear. History never repeats itself exactly, though the general lines are the same. Physical-force extremists are more dangerous to-day than ever before, because the public are half-educated, and because the suffrage is universal. Even if we had a Burke, an armed crusade against Bolshevism is plainly impossible now, because a certain proportion of the half-educated voters and soldiers would sympathise with it. The best—indeed, the only—thing we can do is to keep outside the earthquake zone.

We are glad that the majority of the House of Commons are recovering their senses on the subject of the Central Empires, and realising the obvious fact that it never pays to ruin a debtor. The Hun-hunters seem to be silenced, and as two of them are barristers, they have probably received a hint that **preferment** does not lie that way. A loan of £20,000,000 is to be made to Germany, of which England puts up £5,000,000. The sale of 2,000,000 tons of German shipping is to be proceeded with, and though nobody can foretell the market price per ton, "we are getting on," if not towards the 25,000 millions spoken of at the General Election as the indemnity recommended by the late Governor of the Bank, towards something. That Mr. Lloyd George agreed to the French paying more for German coal than was stipulated in the Treaty, in order to keep up the price of British exported coal, is an unworthy suggestion made by the gutter press of Paris. As Sir Laming Evans pointed out, the price of our exported coal is the world price, regulated by supply and demand.

It now appears that we have paid £1,700,000 for Siberian bank shares as a device to enable General Alexieff to draw on that bank. Mr. Cecil Harmsworth, with a candour that does him credit, admitted that, though he was bound to defend the estimate, he was not bound to describe the investment as a prudent one. It is merely a part of our muddled and ineffectual Russian policy. Our expenditure on Persia is equally indefensible. If Persia is necessary as a buffer to keep Bolshevism out of India, let the Indian exchequer pay, for no part of the empire has profited more out of the war, and suffered less. Nor can we see why we are bound to support the refugees whom the Bolsheviks have driven out of their country. They should have stayed to fight the Bolsheviks, or perished in the attempt. Charity begins at home, and, as we said last week, if we are to finance all the bankrupt States of the East, and support the victims of foreign revolutions, we shall never be able to reduce our taxes.

Politicians continue to prate and journalists to scribble about economy, and haggle over a hundred thousand here or a hundred thousand there. What we want is to reduce our expenditure by fifty per cent., and this can be done by a total change of policy. None of these talkers and writers have the courage to specify the economies they recommend. Will they: 1. Advocate the selling of the West India islands to America (reserving a naval base and coaling station) in cancellation of our debt to that country? 2. Will they postpone the operation of Mr. Fisher's Education Act for another five years? 3. Will they stop all subsidies and bind the Government to no further increase of pensions? 4. Will they bind the Government to stop paying Irish old-age pensions, and giving grants to local authorities in Ireland, if any kind of Home Rule is passed? 5. Will they withdraw our army of occupation from Mesopotamia, and hand the country over to a chartered company, as they did Rhodesia? 6. Will they turn Dr. Addison, with his costly quackeries of Socialism, out of office, with a handsome solatium? It would save us a lot of money to pension Dr. Addison. By "they," we mean the economists. 7. Will they bind the Government not to go to war for Poland, Czechoslovakia, or Jugoslavia?

If the economists will promise and vow these things, we shall believe in their sincerity, but not before. Mr. Churchill's policy was to fight Bolshevism, which is a bold and intelligible one. But before embarking on it, he should have made sure of his ability to carry it through. Now he seems to have conceived the idea of getting Germany to fight Bolshevism. The Germans are more likely to fight with than against Bolsheviks, unless we help them to live and thrive. For ourselves, we do not believe that Bolshevism will last, still less spread, for the plain reason that it is nonsense, and nonsense does not in the long run prevail over sense, even amongst the uneducated nations. As Lincoln used to say, "You may fool all the people some of the time; you may fool some of the people all the time; but you cannot fool all the people all the time." The Russian peasant, though illiterate, has some horse-sense: and Lenin has fooled him long enough. One day he will revolt.

Mr. Harold Cox points out in the current number of the *Edinburgh Review* that the population of England and Wales has doubled in the last sixty years, having been 18,000,000 in 1851 and just over 36,000,000 in 1911. Suppose that rate of increase to continue—high birth-rates wish it to be augmented—in something less than 360 years the population of England and Wales would have reached the figure of 2,304,000,000 or five hundred millions more than the present population of the whole globe. Yet, as Mr. Cox says, 360 years are but a small span in the life of a nation or the world, merely the gap which separates Edward VI. from Edward VII. If three or four other great nations were to increase at the same rate, it is obvious that wholesale massacres of some kind would have to take place. The pressure of population on the desirable portions of the world's surface is the cause of all wars. The question for the coming generations is whether they will keep down babies, or be blown up by bombs. We know which we should prefer.

Perhaps no wickeder or more foolish thing was ever done by Government than the increased grant payable to a demobilised soldier for every child born within nine months after his discharge. As the result the birth-rate took a sudden leap upwards and reached the highest number recorded in any quarter since the establishment of civil registration. The actual increase of population in England and Wales by excess of births over deaths in the three months ending 31st March, 1920, was 133,445. At the same rate of increase we should add another 5 millions to our population in ten years. If the mass production of babies is to be subsidised, why should the military sire be selected for payment? We think the clergyman and the dock labourer have as good a claim. It is a mere matter of statistics that a high birth-rate means a high death-rate, for the simple reason that eight children cannot be as carefully looked after as two. The chief advocates of the high birth-rate are the clergy and the doctors, the clergy because they think birth-restriction wicked, the doctors because they know that some of the methods are dangerous, and also (being human) because it would diminish their practice.

We are glad to see that the new British Communist Party, of which Pelman's prize boy, Colonel Malone, is one of the leaders, inscribes Dictatorship on its banners. There is no nonsense about constitutional forms, or liberty, or equality, or fraternity. All representative government is a fraud: an absolute Dictator is the thing. Many people agree with this view of government: the only question is, who is to be the dictator? A considerable portion of mankind are in favour of Cæsar, whether called Cromwell, Napoleon, or Hohenzollern. The British Communists say that the proletariat must be the dictator. But as a mob cannot be a dictator—the phrase proletariat dictator is a contradiction in terms—it can only mean that the nearest British copy of Lenin must be invested with absolute power, say, Colonel Malone, or Mr. Robert Williams, or Mr. Smillie. Well, well. We should

prefer Cromwell, either of the Napoleons, or even Wilhelm, to the nominee of the Third International. The restoration of Cæsarism would be an odd result of the Great War: but more unlikely things have happened.

What a shrewd man was the last Lord Derby but one, Dizzy's Stanley! On being asked, somewhere about 1860 or 1870, whether he was in favour of the acquisition of the railways by the State (what we call "nationalisation") he said, No: because I am not satisfied that railways are the last word in locomotion. What would have happened, he went on to ask, if the State had nationalised the stage-coaches at the beginning of the century? They would have made a ruinous bargain. The wisdom of this is apparent to-day. In ten or twelve years everybody will travel by motor or aircraft, and the railways will carry nothing but heavy goods. The same argument really applies to the nationalisation of the coal mines. Who can say that coal is the last word in fuel? There is oil, and other fuel may be discovered, such as peat. It is not the business of the State to embark on speculative commercial ventures.

Another of Lord Derby's profound observations was made to Froude, and by him repeated to Skelton: "Kings and aristocracies can govern empires, but one people cannot govern another people." How true that is, especially with regard to Ireland! The British people, bullied and lectured by Lloyd Georgeites, Trade Unionists, Wee Frees, Tories and Bolsheviks, are trying to settle the government of Ireland. And what Froude wrote of Gladstone's Second Home Rule Bill in 1893 is true to-day. "The Protestants will no more stand it than they did in Tyrconnell's time. . . . The supporters of Home Rule on either side of the Channel are equally unable to understand the dour Calvinism of Ulster. Calvinism at its highest was only a savage determination not to be crushed by lies and tyranny; and in Ireland now there is just the same feeling." It was this dour Calvinism that Messrs. Churchill and Seely set out to crush in 1914 by troops and men-of-war. Luckily they were stopped.

Second-hand booksellers are good barometers of the market. More than one have told us that 'Mr. Romford's Hounds,' or indeed any of the Surtees series, is a better seller than the latest and most authoritative book about the war. This is in one way curious, because a greater contrast to the present state of society in England than 'Jorrocks' or 'Sponge's Sporting Tour' could not well be imagined. Next to Surtees comes Jane Austen, of all people. Books dealing with the Socialist future, and with Spiritualism, are bought. It looks as if everybody was so profoundly dissatisfied with the present that they want to be carried back to the past, or projected to the future. "Let us read about anything but the country fit for heroes," they seem to say. This resolute turning of the back on the loathsome war, without one picturesque battle or decisive victory, is, on the whole, a healthy sign.

We are told that 'Unto this Last' is regarded as a Socialist book, and is being reprinted and sold at prices that would make Ruskin turn in his grave. To Ruskin must be given the credit of having anticipated by half a century two policies which are to-day accepted as *res judicata*; the fixing of wages, and the right of every workman to have work found for him, or to be paid an unemployment dole. But this is only half of Ruskin's doctrine. He preached much, and beautifully, about the dignity of labour: but then he assumed that the labourer would do his best, and take an interest and pride in his job. Trade unionism has knocked all that nonsense about the craftsman on the head. Nobody takes the slightest interest to-day in anything but putting in the least time for the most money. No man or woman ever gives his or her attention to the job for which he or she is paid. You go to take a ticket at a railway station or on the tube, and the clerk (male or

female) is busy reading a paper, or a novel, and throws you out a ticket without taking his or her eyes off the page. When your cook should be preparing your food, she is powdering her nose or curling her hair.

Margot Tennant and Benjamin Jowett were exactly suited to one another as companions, for the old man was shy and fond of fashion, and the young lady was fashionable and cheeky. The Master of Balliol was a modern Socrates, and had a wonderful knack of showing old and young how foolish and muddle-headed they were. His power of silence was wonderful and exceptional, for very few people realise that nine times out of ten it is better to say nothing than much. If the Stuarts could only have held their tongues, they might have been on the throne at this day! Jowett had as sure an eye for a future statesman as the best trainer for a promising colt. In recommending Asquith, Milner, and Balfour to Margot he certainly spotted winners. His great asset was his common-sense, which he gave in homoeopathic doses to undergraduates who had every sense but that one.

It is well known that Jowett wanted to marry Florence Nightingale: but no one but Margot would have dared to pump the Master on the subject. "What was your lady-love like, dear Master?" "Violent, very violent," chirped Jowett. Florence Nightingale was all that, as Lord Panmure and Sidney Herbert well knew. She was indeed the *furens femina*, or she wouldn't have succeeded in making the War Office answer her letters and do things. Had she married the Master, the cause of divorce would have been advanced half a century by two powerful advocates. Socrates and Xantippe would have been child's play to such a union.

There is a decided slump in theatrical business, which is generally ascribed to increased expenses. The Palace Theatre, started for English opera, has had a successful career as "the parson's music-hall," and is now, we learn, to be sold and converted into a cinema show. While expenses have, of course, increased, the poor quality of the entertainments provided is one cause of the slump. Managers got into the way of producing twaddle during the war, and have not yet got out of it. Authors complain that they have good plays in their desks, while our stage is being heavily dosed with American sentiment and "krook" dramas. Revivals are played for safety, and it looks as if the West End manager might discover Shakespeare, who, as the literary gentleman in 'Nicholas Nickleby' remarked, was an adapter of some merit.

The cinema show, which has already developed the fifth largest industry in the United States, goes on booming. But it has one grave objection from the fashionable point of view. Our drama, ceasing to be the mirror of the age, has become the chief means of advertising daring modes and dashing colours in the all-important line of feminine adornment. In the cinema play all effects of colour are lost; white is at a premium; and facial expression is the chief weapon, so that it is impossible to wear a hat which shows half an eyebrow, if viewed at a favourable angle.

The War Exhibition at the Crystal Palace is of decided interest, but most people are tired of such things. It takes some research to discover the points of it, apart from the splendid gun which occupies a dominating position in the centre transept. The Palace is always somewhat depressing; here only, we imagine, can groups isolated from the Albert Memorial be seen, and at present the grounds are spoilt by hideous structures put up for some forgotten exhibition. The section concerning women's work in the war seems to us the best; but there are attractive pictures here and there by first-rate hands, and one can look through a long German periscope. Altogether the Palace seems too large for most exhibitions; its vastness is always a little melancholy, with its grimy statues and glib exponents of super-human cleaners in commercial stalls.

CABINET MINISTERS AS JOURNALISTS.

TO what extent is it desirable, or permissible, that Cabinet Ministers should contribute articles to the Press? Where is the line to be drawn? In Queen Anne's reign Harley and St. John certainly supplied Swift with the materials for his articles in the *Examiner*, and it is more than likely that St. John wrote some of the articles himself. As an exile, and when allowed to return, but excluded from Parliament, Bolingbroke contributed regularly to the *Craftsman*, as did Chesterfield, and to the *World*: but neither of these noblemen were in office. For more than a century after this brilliant literary period Ministers ceased to be "writative," if we may borrow Pope's quaint adjective. Certainly Canning wrote satirical verse for the *Anti-Jacobin*, and it may be that he wrote leaders for the *Morning Post*—we don't know, but we suspect it. In any case it was when he was out of office. Disraeli wrote a great deal for the *Times* before he got into Parliament; and as he always refused to be paid for his journalism, we don't wonder that the *Times* clutched eagerly at 'The Runnymede Letters.' Between 1853 and 1858, when he was out of office, Disraeli founded, edited, and wrote much in a weekly called *The Press*, and that was the end of his journalism. We don't know how far articles in the magazines can be called journalism, but Gladstone wrote (of course anonymously) a great many articles in the *Quarterly*; and one in the *Edinburgh Review*, on the Franco-Prussian War in 1870, when he was Prime Minister. The quarterly magazines, however, are different. Lord Salisbury, when Lord Robert Cecil, wrote regularly for the *SATURDAY REVIEW*, and afterwards as Lord Cranborne and Lord Salisbury for the *Quarterly*; but only, we believe, when out of office. The question is whether a Cabinet Minister, when in office, can with propriety write in the daily, evening, or weekly journals. Decidedly we think not.

The Lord Chancellor and the Secretary of State for War are to-day constant contributors to the daily and weekly journals of signed articles. We object to this for the following reasons. 1. It is undignified. The head of the law and a Secretary of State ought not to descend into an arena, where much mud is inevitably thrown, and where they may be entangled in the coil of a most unseemly squabble. 2. It is what the French call *une concurrence indigne*. There are a great many educated men who are trying to earn a livelihood by journalism. It is not fitting, or fair, that they should be elbowed on one side by highly paid officials, who may, or may not, be able to write at all. We admit at once that both Lord Birkenhead and Mr. Churchill write extremely well; they are both finished rhetoricians; and if they were professional journalists, would certainly be employed and well paid. But other Cabinet Ministers, minded to follow their example, will probably not be able to write; and we have already too much journalism contributed by names, not pens. 3. It is a kind of breach of confidence. Of course, these two Ministers are not such fools as to write Cabinet secrets in their articles. Nevertheless, the secret knowledge is underneath the writing. What would be thought of a company director who should turn financial editor or critic? Or how should we regard a fashionable barrister who wrote chatty articles about his cases, without mentioning names? 4. It is in a way a breach of contract. The nation pays Cabinet Ministers what used to be regarded as handsome salaries—let them be raised, if they are not enough—as whole-time men. This is proved by the fact that Cabinet Ministers are not allowed to retain directorships while in office. The duties of a modern Minister have grown so much that the public expects them to be whole-timers, and, indeed, if they do their duty, they have no time for journalism. To all this it may be answered that writing an article is no different from making a speech, which is often a spoken article. To which we reply a speech is not paid for, and an article is; and this brings us to objection 5. It is a species of corruption. For these gentlemen are very highly paid for their articles. They are not as disin-

terested as Disraeli, though we think he was more hard up than they can possibly be. Mr. Churchill gets paid, we are informed, £275 for an article in a weekly paper, and we suppose the Lord Chancellor takes no less. We realise that £5,000 a year means in these days a net salary of £2,800, and one article a month at 200 guineas each means £2,500. We are more than willing that Cabinet Ministers should be exempt from income-tax: their salaries as reduced by income-tax and super-tax are inadequate to their position. But we do object to the cash nexus between a Cabinet Minister and a newspaper.

THE SCANDAL OF COMMITTEE D.

AFTER an exhaustive debate, the House of Commons passed the second reading of the Trade Ballot Bill, introduced by Mr. A. M. Samuel, the member for Farnham. The Bill was carefully drawn, and was designed to secure the secrecy of the ballot in Trade Union voting, by means very similar to those adopted for the protection of voters in parliamentary elections. The present so-called trade union ballots are, in most cases, a farce, if not a fraud. The ballot-boxes stand in trade union offices or lodges, and the votes are dropped under the eyes of trade union officials, who know every voter who approaches with his paper in hand. The member who votes against a strike becomes a marked man, open to all the petty persecution and terrible pressure of militant opinion in his neighbourhood, than which there is no power on earth more difficult to resist. Either secret voting is a good thing or a bad: if it is a good or rather necessary protection in parliamentary elections, it is equally or more so in trade union ballots, which decide the question of strikes. We cannot think of a question which more vitally concerns the public safety and our industrial prosperity than this. Yet in the debate the Government gave the House no leading; and with the exception, we believe, of Messrs. Pike Pease and Baldwin, who voted for the Bill, the members of the Government were absent from the division lobby. Their followers were not slow to take the hint. The Bill was referred to Standing Committee D, of which Mr. Macmaster is chairman and which is composed of about 60 members, 20 being a quorum. With the greatest difficulty a quorum was collected, though all the members of the Labour Party attended every meeting. Then one by one the Liberal and Conservative members began to steal away, Captain Bowyer and Sir Henry Craik leading the retreat. The first two clauses were carried by a committee composed of about a third of its force, and then the Labour Members simply threw out the remaining clauses, and reported the empty husk of the Bill, meaningless, worthless, to the House "amidst laughter." Thus the first real attempt to check the tyranny and intimidation of the trade unions, and to protect their older members against the rashness and ignorance of the shop-stewards and the young hot-heads, has been defeated by the apathy or cowardice of the Government, and those of their followers who represent capital as opposed to labour in industrial politics. It goes without saying that Mr. A. M. Samuel was abandoned to the malice and derision of the Trade Unions and the Co-operative Societies, though he has perhaps gained more in his constituency than he is aware. We do not know whether to admire more the turpitude or the duncery of the behaviour of the Government and the members of the Committee. The Government was probably influenced by sheer opportunism, a nice calculation of the votes they would gain or lose by supporting the Bill, and being unable to work out the calculation, decided, like all opportunists in a similar plight, to do nothing. It is just possible, we admit, that in the overwhelming anxiety and complexity of foreign politics, the Government overlooked the matter. But of the members, who have been elected largely by middle-class votes, and who are deeply interested in saving industry from Bolsheviks, what are we to say? What can we say, except that the cowardice, indolence, and stupidity, which hang about the necks of the

owners of capital and land, deterred them from the one chance offered to them of ranging on their side the solid and sensible opinion of the working-classes? When the trade of the country is once more paralysed by railway and mining strikes, brought about by fraudulent ballots, they may remember and regret their folly.

After this scandal—for it is no less—we are not surprised in the decline of the power of Parliament. Why should anybody respect a body which does not respect itself? The House of Commons seems to us in much the same plight as the Roman Senate from the reign of Augustus down to the break-up of the empire by Diocletian and Constantine. The shadow of a great power, lip-service of the most correct courtesy was paid to it by the emperors. Its name was still used in public documents; but its power was gone: it merely registered the imperial decrees. The senate deserved its fate by its servility and indolence, as the House of Commons will deserve the atrophy which is quickly stealing upon it.

THE ECLIPSE OF COAL—AND COAL-MINERS.

AS the miners in England and elsewhere seem absolutely determined to bring about a coal famine, the nations must look out for alternative sources of heat, light and power. Happily, coal is not absolutely indispensable, as the miners' leaders seem to imagine. The agitation of Mr. Smillie and his sympathisers may lead, not to the hoped-for dictatorship of the coal-miners, but to the abolition of the power they possess at present—and the cleansing of the town atmosphere.

As an alternative source of power, light and heat, electric energy gained by water-power and the use of oil are rapidly being developed all over the world. The harnessing of waterfalls has only begun. The energy of commercially exploitable waterfalls is great enough to run all the world's machinery and all the world's railways, and to light and heat all the towns in addition. The United States alone have more than 100,000,000 horse-power units available in this way, but, unfortunately, England is exceedingly poor in waterfalls. Even by means of artificial lakes only a few hundred thousand horse-power units can be developed:

Oil is becoming a serious competitor to coal as a means of propulsion. In a few years the British Merchant Marine should use more oil than coal. It is true that at present there is a shortage of oil in the world. However, new oil-bearing districts are being rapidly opened, and when all the wells have run dry, there are gigantic stores of oil shale in many countries. Besides, the vegetable world may be made to yield gigantic quantities of oil and power alcohol.

Throughout the world there are huge peat deposits which are used only locally. Science will no doubt succeed in turning peat into a cheap concentrated fuel. The Governments of the various States which are rich in peat and wealthy philanthropists should stimulate the ingenuity of inventors by offering huge prizes for the successful exploitation of this promising source of wealth and power.

The most immediately usable and satisfactory substitute for coal is undoubtedly lignite. The potentialities of this mineral have so far been strangely overlooked by the Anglo-Saxon countries. Lignite, or brown coal, is a soft fibrous substance, a very young kind of coal, which is found in gigantic quantities all over the world, and which frequently occurs in thick layers close to the surface. Lignite contains all the precious by-products of coal. By distillation it may be made to yield vast quantities of coke, gas, tar, oil, etc. The United Kingdom is apparently very poor in lignite, but the British Dominions and Colonies and the United States have plenty of it. Canada contains far more coal than the whole Continent of Europe, and the bulk of it consists of lignite, which remains practically unused. Meanwhile, half the coal consumed in Canada is imported from the United States.

Lignite is no longer in the experimental stage. Germany and Austria have shown the great value of this fuel by using it on a large scale. Those countries pro-

duce between them about 90 per cent. of the world's lignite. Imperial Germany possessed three-fourths of the coal of the Continent. It is particularly noteworthy that, notwithstanding its vast wealth in coal, Germany has developed the production of lignite far more rapidly. Between 1887 and 1913 her coal production increased a little more than three-fold, while her lignite production multiplied almost six-fold. In the former year she produced practically four times as much coal as lignite, but at present she produces almost as much lignite as coal.

Part of the German lignite is converted into coke, gas, oil, and tar, and part is turned into an excellent patent fuel called "briketts." The brown dust is put into moulds, and subjected to powerful dry pressure. The heat generated thereby suffices to convert the loose dust into a hard fuel similar to the patent fuel made in England by mixing coal dust with pitch and pressing it. While lignite in the natural state contains much water, has a low fuel value, and is sold at a low price, briketts fetch almost the same price in Germany as coal. At present Germany produces about 25,000,000 tons of briketts per year, a quantity nearly as great as the fuel used in the United Kingdom for domestic purposes.

In Germany the soil covering the lignite is removed by automatic machinery, by means of land dredgers. Thus a huge quarry-like basin is formed. Rails are laid, and the loose brown stuff is shovelled by unskilled labour into the trucks, or precipitated into them from the working side. The collier's art is not needed. The lignite workers are not irreplaceable, as are the miners. Supervision of the open workings is easy and dawdling difficult. Although the lifting of lignite is generally done by manual labour, the average lignite worker produces at present 2,200 tons per year, while the average coal-miner produces only about 300 tons per year. The production of lignite causes therefore a great saving in man power. It is worth noting that while coal production in Germany greatly declined during the war, the output of lignite increased rapidly.

Lignite and lignite briketts are practically unknown outside Germany and the Austro-Hungarian lands. Small experiments which have been made in the United States and Canada seem to indicate that the lignite of North America possesses all the qualities of the German lignite. These countries alone might in a few years produce many million tons of lignite by means of unskilled labour, providing an excellent fuel which can replace coal for practically every purpose.

Patent fuel made from lignite can far more easily be stored than coal, on account of its regular and uniform shape, and it will keep far longer, because it does not disintegrate easily, when exposed to the air. It is cheaper to transport, because it can be packed more tightly, and owing to the regularity of the blocks, there is little waste through the friction which converts coal into dust. It is far more cleanly to handle in houses than coal. The neat blocks scarcely require a coal bucket.

The world is starving for coal. It does not matter very much where it comes from, so long as it can be got. The shortage of coal in coal-producing countries, such as England, is largely due to the pressing demand from countries which do not produce it. The coal famine will eventually disappear. Alternative sources of power, heat and light are being developed. Eventually we may replace coal entirely with cleaner sources of power, such as electric energy, molecular force, oil, etc. Our towns may become as free from coal dust as were those of ancient Greece. Meanwhile, an efficient substitute for coal must be found as quickly as possible, and lignite seems capable of fulfilling that want.

MR. KIPLING AND THE NEW DECAMERON.

THE imperialism of yesterday and the Oxford of today make a piquant contrast in literature. Extremes meet, when we put together Mr. Kipling's latest book and the sequel of 'The New Decameron.'* The right way to review these two books would be to

* Letters of Travel. By Rudyard Kipling. 6s. net.—The New Decameron: Second Day. Basil Blackwell.

invite Mr. Kipling to weigh up 'The New Decameron,' and to ask the most (to Mr. Kipling) outrageous of all the story-tellers in 'The Decameron,' say Mr. Bill Nobbs, to estimate Mr. Kipling. The results should be emphatic in both cases, because we cannot conceal from ourselves the suspicion that neither would very much appreciate the other. One could conceive, for example, Mr. Kipling, fiercely attired in white drill and a pith helmet, writing to prove, as Carlyle did before him in some 100 volumes, the futility of literature as opposed to life as lived by the Overseas Men, on whose doings he reverently gloats in this volume. He would be writing, of course, on the verandah of the Overseas Club, the institution from which all the writers in 'The New Decameron' would be automatically black-balled. While the inmates sang to one another and to Mr. Kipling's enraptured ears, "Pack your kit, and trek, Johnny Bowlegs," or the young men spoke in that exquisite dialect mixed with pidgin-English and local Chinese terms, rounded with corrupt Portuguese, of "the legs of a horse," Mr. Kipling's quill would savagely administer correction to the men and women who stayed at home. He would point out with justice that in none of these ten stories is there any reference to the Empire. He would quite properly regret the absence of appreciation either of the Outside Men, or the supreme business of Getting Things Done. While admitting that there are a large number of right ways of constructing tribal lays, he would observe that these were all wrong, because they are not tribal. They are even anti-tribal. Take, for example, the tale called 'Bread upon the Waters.' They tell doubtful stories even in the Overseas Club, Mr. Kipling would say, but they don't shout them out to Women of the Breed, and this salacious chronicle of how a husband learned from another man that his wife was tattooed "high up on the front of her round, white thigh" is actually attributed to a woman—a lady of fashion. We know, says Mr. Kipling, what sort of Fashion. Or again, the stories of Mr. Bill Noggs called 'Once upon a time, what rubbish!' Mr. Kipling would rightly say. "In the Open Spaces we have no use for the *conte*. Mr. Noggs thinks it is clever to write a story of a young wife who died a maid, and who, when this fact was mentioned to her Maker, sat up in her coffin, smiled, and said, 'Why do you tell what you were not asked—er—Mr. Smith?' " "We may leave all that," Mr. Kipling would cry, "to the Frenchmen of Paris. We of the Overseas Club prefer to learn the Art of Murder from the Gaul, "furious in luxury, merciless in toil."

In short, Mr. Kipling would say, itching to join in that heart-filling conversation on the supreme subjects of "tea, silk, shortings and shanghai ponies," that this book is just a part of the Provincialism of London—"that big slack-water coated with the drift and rubbish of a thousand men's thoughts." The Overseas Club and the Outside Men are not provincial; indeed, Mr. Kipling proves this by describing all their virtues in capitals. None the less it would be fair to say that 'The New Decameron' would have no circulation among the Breed. "The Overseas Club," on being asked as to this, or any other question, involving mental application, "says for the most part, 'Skittles.' "

Thus Mr. Kipling on 'The New Decameron.' Now 'The New Decameron,' if it dares, on Mr. Kipling. The difficulty here is to achieve a collective voice, for there are at least ten story-tellers with all (presumably) individual points of view. It would serve Mr. Blackwell right, if we singled him out in punishment for his collection of "Press opinions of the 'First Day,' tabulated in order to facilitate the fixing of a General Critical Standard." It is going to be a bad business, if the author is to be allowed to turn round and rend the critic. Does Mr. Blackwell not realise that the critic is beyond good and evil? In fact, he knows neither. It is all very well for Mr. Blackwell to uproot the cherished convictions of Mr. Kipling on the Empire, Morality and the White Man's Dividends, but the critic—that is blasphemy.

All the same we shall leave Mr. Blackwell and his Grand-Guignol story of 'The Master Printer' alone. We might, if he had been more careful of our critical

feelings, have told him that it ought to have been written in French, and might then have been attributed to De Maupassant in his older years. But as it is, we shall invent a new person called 'The New Decameronian.' This person would approach Mr. Kipling's 'Tales of Travel' delicately. "Literature," he would observe, "is the art of reticence. Look, for example, at the story by Mr. Michael Sadleir, called 'Jim of Molock's Bar.' Is it a murder tale, or is it not? It is, and who out of our own little group could tell you who was murdered, where, why, and when? That is the *conte*—to leave you guessing. In Mr. Sadleir's case, we may tell you in confidence that he didn't guess the answer himself." The 'New Decameronian' is like that. He is self-centred, and instead of dealing with Mr. Kipling, prefers to deal with himself. But he is brought back to the business by our contention that Mr. Kipling, even if he suffers from being understood, is at least read. This rouses 'The New Decameronian.' "Not by us," he observes. "How then, can you criticize him?" we enquire. "As he criticizes us, by failing to meet." After a little persuasion, however, he goes on, cautiously admitting that he has read the book in order to learn what to avoid. "For example," says he, "take this:—

"You know the First Sign-post on the Great Main Road? 'Where a Woman advertises that she is virtuous, a Man that he is a gentleman, a Community that it is loyal, or a Country that it is law-abiding—go the other way.' " "Well," says the 'New Decameronian,' "why doesn't he?" "Mr. Kipling," he says, "is so concerned with proving that the Breed is right that, whenever he finds it disagrees with him, he calls it Democracy. But after all, it is democracy which gives him his circulation. Now we like democracy, and it won't read us. Take Camilla Doyle's poem 'The Vase' in our book:—

"Tired sets
Of little men in bowler hats,
Were all the force the streets could find
As expression for its eager mind."

That represents our point of view. We like little men in bowler hats, but they don't like us, because they suspect we wear top-hats. Now they like Mr. Kipling, who hates them and their bowler hats, because they suspect that he always wears one. Mr. Max Beerbohm made him exchange his bowler-hat for Britannia's helmet, and Democracy thought he looked better that way. In this book Mr. Kipling has swapped the bowler-hat for Buddha's lotus-leaf (in places), and they'll like that too. He is the Democrat *malgré lui*, and we're aristocrats similarly. It's ridiculous."

It is, but the truth is that in the end the Democrat *malgré lui* wins. Because in his own despite, Mr. Kipling does touch at flashing moments some secret pulse that has been shamefacedly throbbing in all of us. He takes ugliness with him everywhere—the ugliness of Capital letters for destestable things—and suddenly he finds beauty.

He writes himself down as an Imperialist, hater of Aliens (whether Americans or otherwise) and God's Englishman, and ends up quite simply as a great writer when his Muse, who is too great for him, takes his hand and makes him write of landscape, snow and trees,

"With the restless pencils of the moon."

This doesn't happen to 'The New Decamerons.' They astound the middle classes, they achieve, notably in the rather beautiful imitation of Mr. H. G. Wells by Mr. Vines, a very high literary level. But they never lose themselves. It is a pity, because if Miss Doyle had that fortune, we suspect that she might come face to face with Euterpe.

THE DENIAL OF JUSTICE.

THE High Courts and the Supreme Courts have now begun their annual vacation, and for ten weeks they will all be closed. The Central Criminal Court ("Old Bailey") will re-assemble on September 7th, but, save for the County Courts, the civil courts of

the country will be idle until the middle of October. This is a state of affairs which is highly unsatisfactory. A few weeks ago the congestion of the courts was officially reported to be so bad that both Houses of Parliament petitioned the King for the appointment of two additional judges. Those appointments were promptly made—and now no progress will be made in civil suits for a period of ten weeks. Large numbers of actions, set down for trial many months ago, are waiting to be heard, the lists of divorce petitions, despite the Saturday sittings at the end of term, has never been so long, but the "Long Vacation" is to be observed as of old, and in consequence, when the Courts do re-assemble, there will be the same tale of congestion and delay. We confess our amazement that this condition of affairs is tolerated by the public.

Many times since his appointment to the office of Lord Chief Justice, Lord Reading has expressed his enthusiasm for speeding up the work of the Courts. He once said that it was his ambition that actions could be tried within a few days of having been set down for trial. Yet the Lord Chief Justice has done nothing to expedite the working of our legal machinery. We now have a youthful Lord Chancellor who has not hesitated to break with traditional views. To his credit he has raised a distinguished County Court judge to the High Court bench. Lord Birkenhead has struggled with the executive, so that judges should be free to perform the work for which they were appointed, and not be called away to discharge other duties. Yet Lord Birkenhead tolerates the scandal of the Long Vacation. On Tuesday last the Lord Chancellor summoned the Council of the Judges, yet he has not taken the opportunity of introducing such reforms as will enable the Courts to sit during the next ten weeks. This Council of Judges was called together under section 75 of the famous Judicature Act of 1873. This section decreed that the judges should meet annually "for the purpose of considering the operation of this Act, and of the Rules of the Court, and of inquiring into any defects which may appear to exist in the system of procedure in the High Court of Justice, or in any other Court." Surely a ten weeks' vacation at a time of serious legal congestion is a "defect in the system of procedure," into which the Council of Judges should have enquired.

The work of the judges is very exacting and such as to render a reasonable holiday essential for them. But a holiday of ten weeks in the summer, coupled with three other vacations of about a fortnight each, is generosity that has become wanton extravagance. An annual holiday when the work of the Courts is at a standstill, is also desirable in the interests of those who practise in the Courts. But if the opinion of barristers and solicitors generally could be obtained, we feel certain that it would be opposed to the present length of the Long Vacation. Most professions are ruled mainly by their more successful members. It may be very pleasant for Sir John Doe, K.C., having already earned his £20,000, or £2,000 as the case may be, or for Mr. Richard Roe, senior partner in the well-known firm of solicitors, to feel that for ten weeks the rough and tumble life of the Courts will cease, and that he need only come occasionally to town for events of more than usual importance. But, if the real facts of the average professional life in the law could be made known, we should see numbers of barristers and solicitors who scarcely know how to keep the wolf from the door during their long period of enforced inactivity.

But the hardships inflicted upon the legal profession are as nothing in comparison with the inconvenience inflicted upon the public. Practically every case which will be tried next term has already been set down for trial, and thus each case will be heard ten weeks later than, but for the Long Vacation, would have been necessary. There is no justification whatever for a legal vacation of more than six weeks. The Courts ought to re-assemble in the middle of September. If this change was made, Lord Reading's professed ambitions about speeding justice would quickly be fulfilled. Until the vested interests of the Law abandon the ten weeks' vacation, we can see no possibility of rendering the working of the Courts truly efficient.

CORRESPONDENCE

A DEFENCE OF MR. CHURCHILL'S POLICY.

SIR,—Six years ago we went to war to prevent the cowardly savages of Russia from being conquered, plundered and enslaved by the Germans, with the result that they have been conquered, plundered and enslaved by the Jews. There is now a possibility of our having to go to war with these Jews in order to prevent them from conquering, plundering and enslaving the Poles. Now, instead of doing this, and wasting more British blood and money in fighting for worthless alien ingrates, would it not be advisable to admit that we (Lord Northcliffe, and Messrs. Bottomley and Maxse) were wrong, and do, as Mr. Churchill suggests, permit or induce the Germans to conquer and enslave the Russian brutes to any extent they please. It is evident that they are as incapable of governing themselves as the aboriginal or Romish Irish, and the Germans are, at least, as qualified to do it for them as the Jew anarchists. The men who had ruled Russia for several centuries, and made it a great Empire were chiefly of Germanic origin. If the Germans are permitted, or induced, to render Europe the service mentioned, they will, of course, enrich themselves by exploiting the undeveloped resources of Russia, just as we have enriched ourselves by exploiting the undeveloped resources of India and large portions of Africa. But provided we are allowed to trade with Germany, we shall get a share of this Russian wealth, just as the Germans, by trading with us, got a share of the wealth we have extracted from India and Africa.

It has been argued by the Northcliffes, Bottomleys and Maxses, that the conquest and annexation of Russia would increase the power of the Germans to such an extent that they would be tempted to conquer all the rest of Europe. But is this likely? Is our country stronger and more capable of conquering other nations by the possession of India, Egypt and Roman Catholic Ireland? Would not the possession of Russia render the Germans weaker as a military power, and force them to become as peace-loving as the possession of India, Egypt and Ireland has forced us to be?

JOSEPH BANISTER.

LORD MILNER AND BLACK SOLDIERS.

SIR,—I notice in your issue of 31st July, a letter by Mr. H. de Montmorency, stating that Lord Milner countenanced "the arming of African negroes to attack the Boers during the war of 1899." As I served in that war, I can confidently state that the statement is false; on the contrary, every effort was made to prevent any armed participation by negroes, and, as a case in point, I believe the High Commissioner of Basutoland had great difficulty in persuading that warlike race to stand aside.

FAIR PLAY.

IRELAND AND THE DAILY NEWS.

SIR,—Will you grant me the hospitality of your columns to congratulate the *Daily News* on its splendid propaganda in Ireland? By circulating a report regarding the late Colonel Smyth, D.S.O., which had not the faintest resemblance to the truth the *Daily News* was able to stimulate its noble friends, the Irish "patriots," to remove this servant of a tyrannical government. But the "brave" heart of the *Daily News* must be sorrowful at the slow, clumsy work of Sinn Fein: three or four constables murdered in a week is but a poor return for such journalistic enterprise! Why does not the *Daily News* whet the almost blunted purpose of these slow-moving assassins by employing some of its friends, the agitators from India and Egypt, in Ireland? And I can procure an introduction for the *Daily News* to a conscientious objector, a man after that paper's own heart: one who hates the English, but loves the niggers and the unwashed! His love of facts is nearly as faint as that of the *Daily News*' Irish correspondent; he, too, delights in inflicting sorrow and suffering on others when, in so doing, there is no danger whatever to himself. He might help the *Daily News*. HERVEY DE MONTMORENCY.

THE PRESENT CHAOS AND THE COMING CRISIS.

SIR.—With Ireland in the hands of rebels, with Bolshevism victorious in Eastern Europe and Northern Asia, and with rates rising and trade dwindling, there is every reason to fear that the coming winter will be one of the most anxious ever experienced in the history of this country.

At the General Election we Conservatives were bidding by our leaders to vote solid for Mr. Lloyd George—the assumption being that “the Bottomless Pitt,” whose skill and courage had enabled this country, as we were told, to weather the storm, would enable it also to produce a machine-made millennium satisfactory to heroes, bureaucrats, and politicians. The assumption that the man who, as it was held, had won the war would be the best person to negotiate the peace which was expected to follow it was, perhaps, not unreasonable, but our leaders should have insisted, before chaining themselves to his chariot wheel, upon the withdrawal of the slanders by which Mr. George gained fame and power at the expense of the taxpaying classes in general and the landowners in particular.

The result of their self-abasement is, of course, that his Conservative supporters will have to bear a large share of the indignation felt by all intelligent men at the Premier's cringing servility to Sinn Fein and Trade Unionist bullies and at his cynical indifference to the taxpayers' sufferings during a time of unexampled financial strain. For the past eighteen months he has been bellowing “Peace, peace,” when there was no peace, and by his personal rancour towards Turkey and his share in the handing over of hundreds of thousands of Moslems to the rule of mercenary and merciless Greeks—who do not hesitate to shoot their prisoners in cold blood—he has done more than any other English statesman to endanger our Eastern Empire.

We are often told that, if we get rid of Mr. George, a worse evil might befall us in the shape of a Labour Government. The question, however, may reasonably be asked whether this would really be a worse thing? Whatever enormity were perpetrated under a Socialist Government would be done in spite of our protests and our votes, while we Conservatives ourselves participated, however unwillingly, in that farcical tribunal—Sankey's Circus—which threw the coal owners to the wolves, and in the abject surrender to the railwaymen just when the public had got them beaten. The latter act of folly is already seriously and directly affecting farmers and landowners, since every rural worker holds that he is as much entitled to £3 a week as the unskilled hobbledehoys who yawn and stamp through their eight hours day at our country railway stations. Still, disastrous and dangerous as this endowment of idleness undoubtedly is, what hope is there of remedy unless we throw off forthwith the Lloyd Georgian yoke and explain that, since Peace has been signed, we are no longer bound to do homage to the Prime Minister in defiance of our convictions? From motives of patriotism, no doubt, we have assented—if not consented—to some most pernicious measures, but, surely, if we do it at once, it is not too late to reconsider our political position?

Abroad, Mr. George's policy is eminently calculated to injure our position as one of the two great Asiatic powers still remaining.

The Allies owe much to Asia and Africa, for without the assistance of Japan, without the loyalty of India, and the ready response of her peoples and princes to our call, and without the courage and devotion of the Black Mercenaries whom France has so freely employed, the defeat of Germany would have been impossible. Unfortunately, the Premier does not recognise this, and has thought fit to single out for special punishment the only Asiatic Power which fought against us, and to connive at the partition of Turkey and the aggrandisement of Greece, her hereditary enemy, and the country which hesitated longest to take up the sword, and therefore suffered least by the war. The result is, unfortunately, a growing wave of indignation throughout the Moslem world, and a growing feeling

among Asiatics and Africans generally, that Turkey is being punished on account of her origin and her religion quite as much as for her participation in hostilities.

It is the misfortune of the Turk to be speechless as well as “unspeakable,” since to the crimes of race and religion he adds that of poverty, so that, while Greece can spend hundreds of thousands of pounds in securing a “good press,” Turkey cannot afford to bribe so much as a single sub-editor's assistant. Further, while the Turk's religion is the most democratic in the world and knows nothing of bishops, priests, and deacons, it is equally detested by the Ritualist and the Calvinist, who both infinitely prefer the Jew to the Moslem. Now the Jew contemns Christ as either a myth or an impostor, while the Moslem venerated Him as one of the four great Prophets sent from God.

C. F. RYDER.

THE WOLVES AND THE SHEEP.

SIR.—In *Æsop's* fable, the wolves sent an embassy to the sheep saying, “Those wicked dogs are the cause of all; they are incessantly barking at us and provoking us. Send them away, and there will be no longer any obstacle to our eternal friendship and peace.” The silly sheep listened; the dogs were dismissed, and the flock, deprived of their protectors, became an easy prey to their treacherous enemy. The English Trade Unions and the other friends of the Sinn Feiners are continually asserting that it is the presence of the Army in Ireland that is the cause of all the murders and outrages and destruction of property there; and that if the Army were withdrawn there would be perfect peace. What the Army is doing in the South and West of Ireland, except to be sent out on silly patrols to be ambushed and shot at—without even a trench dog to give them warning of danger—is hard to say.

Sir Hamar Greenwood, according to the newspapers, speaking very differently from what he did in the House of Commons, is reported to have told the National Union of Railwaymen that there *were* troops in Ireland, but they *were not* to be used.

Mr. Lloyd George having denounced Sinn Fein in as violent terms as he did the Bolsheviks in Russia, while he was negotiating with them under the camouflage of commercial relationships, has now offered to negotiate with the Sinn Feiners, and to grant them any form of government they like, if they will give him the assurance that they will not proclaim a Republic and not attack Ulster. So, with his recent experience of Germany's treatment of “scraps of paper,” he is going to accept the assurances of the men who were in alliance with Germany during the war, without any valid security that they will keep their pledges. Mr. Lloyd George, as he showed at Versailles, believes in phrases. But Mr. Bonar Law, who is not so ignorant as the Premier, for he was a fervent and strenuous Unionist till Mr. Asquith offered him a seat in a Home Rule Cabinet (since when his Unionism has become emasculated) went a good deal further. He must have known that the late John Redmond in America and another Nationalist leader in Ireland both declared that their ultimate aim was complete independence; but in Parliament, posing as Constitutional Nationalists, they professed to be willing to accept a Home Rule Bill, as if it were a final settlement. A strong example of the worth of scraps of paper! But with this knowledge, which he must have had when he was the Unionist Leader, Mr. Law told Mr. Thomas and the N.U.R. that if the murders and outrages ceased, he would withdraw the troops. As to what is to become of the unfortunate people in Ireland who are not Sinn Feiners, that is a mere truism. It is to be hoped that the party which elected him as their leader and trusted him will never put him again in office. Meanwhile the usual drivel will go on in the House of Commons over a Home Rule Bill which no one wants to accept, and which Mr. Lloyd George apparently is going to drop, and make a complete surrender to the foes of England.

DON'T TRUST THE WOLVES.

THE PRIVILEGED CLASS.

SIR,—The ruin of the monarchy of Louis XVI. is generally agreed to have been caused by the privileges of the Nobles and Clerical Hierarchy. The restoration of privileges was the bogey before the French nation kept out the "ancien régime" in 1799, 1815, and 1830. The abolition of privileges began the French Revolution, and was never forgotten by the nation. In 1789 the privileges of the Nobles and Clergy; in 1920 the privileges of the "worker," the pampered trade unionist! The wheel has swung the full circle and the grit in our social machine has merely slipped a cog lower. Now it is the miners who in virtue of their occupation refuse to pay income-tax under £250, who caused the sentimental idiots to howl against a universal application all over England of the Rabies Dog-muzzling Order, because their "whippets" could not race. The miners earning £5 to £12 a week are privileged to pay 5s. 2d. a ton for coal; the railway-worker are getting free "passes" on the lines still during the holiday season. The privileged classes of 1789 fell under their enraged fellow-countrymen; the privileged classes of 1920 will follow suit before the onslaught of the "savvy, classes," the middle and upper classes in the nation. Trade Unionism may be cutting Gordian knots by direct action. It is also cutting gorily its own throat by this short cut.

NOTES.

THE REAL CULPRITS.

SIR,—You were good enough recently to publish a letter from me under the above heading. We have not had to wait long for further proof of the causes of the present crushing taxation, falsely called "Government Extravagance."

For some months past the railways have been run at a loss of more than £1,000,000 per week, owing to the fact that railway workers have exacted higher wages, and that the increased costs of repairs, of material needed for railway equipment, and of coal have added enormously to the cost of carrying passengers and goods. In order to meet a share of the loss of over fifty million pounds a year the travelling public are about to be asked to pay increased fares. What a passionate outcry has resulted. The *Times* begins a leading article (Saturday, July 17th) as follows:—"The sudden threat to increase the rates of passenger traffic on our railways . . . is unwise." Note the word "threat," when the passenger is asked to pay the cost of the services he receives. If a man buys a postage stamp, and is about to be charged 2d. for the services it promises to perform, as against a penny for similar services in bygone days, it is a "threat" to increase. If railways continue to be run at a loss, the Civil Service Estimates (another name for the taxpayer) will have to find the money. Whereupon certain London daily papers will shriek about "Government waste." As many millions of travellers pay no direct taxation in the form of income-tax, super-tax, or E.P.D., and those travellers have votes, they will bring pressure upon their Members of Parliament to delay the increased fares, and throw the loss on the taxpayer. Hence the railway subsidy, and the size of the Civil Service Estimates. Who are the wasters—the Government, or the travellers who sponge on the taxpayers?

It cannot too often be brought home to the public that there are only about two million voters who pay direct taxes, and that there are about eighteen millions of voters who pay no direct taxes, and who, consequently, outvote the two millions who pay income-tax and such direct taxes. If these eighteen million voters had their way at the present moment, and many of them have had their wages trebled during the war, and are quite able to pay the increased cost of travelling, they would compel the two million direct taxpayers, many of them with fixed incomes who have lost heavily during the war, to find the money, in order that the other sections of the community may travel on their holidays at prices less than it costs to carry passengers by rail. What is known as "Government waste" is, therefore, caused by the non-direct-tax-paying portion

of the electorate forcing the Government to embark upon undertakings which provide benefits, in one form or another, for the non-direct-tax-paying public, at the expense of the direct-tax-paying portion. As the non-direct-tax-paying public provides the majority of the readers of certain of the London daily papers, the latter scream about "Government waste," although the eighteen million electors are the real wastrels. But Mr. Kennedy Jones, in his priceless book, has let the cat out of the bag by telling the world that the main object of the publication of daily papers is to make them a commercial success, and presumably, regardless of the principles of sound statesmanship. Be it also remembered that whatever is collected by indirect taxation is repaid to the indirect taxpayer in the form of State doles—full measure and running over. The wastrels, in railway loss, are the travelling public who sponge on the public purse, and it is high time the public admitted the patent fact.

D. K. MCKENZIE.

THE BOLSHEVIST PROLETARIAT.

SIR,—In your issue of 10th July, a letter appeared on the above subject, signed by C. H. B. Burlton, which should be read by all who value the continuance of social order in the United Kingdom.

It is not perhaps fully realised that Bolshevism under the name of Marxism, has been systematically taught for some years in our Socialist Co-operative Educational establishments, and that the young generation of working men and women is saturated with the revolutionary doctrines which they imbibe at the most impressionable age; and the mischief is by no means confined to the so-called working classes.

And it certainly is not generally realised that the large majority of our countrymen and women who have allowed themselves to be attracted by the specious arguments of Bolshevism, are quite unaware that they are actually the dupes and tools of secret agents who are plotting the destruction of Christendom and of civilisation.

Judging from the precedents of the French Revolution and the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia, it is not an impossible thing in any country for a well organised secret society to engineer a revolution through the instrumentality of a small number of unscrupulous satellites and dupes, who are, however, never admitted into full initiation, but merely used as tools. In neither of these cases was the revolution a spontaneous uprising of the people against a tyrannical form of government: the myths surrounding the French Revolution have been mercilessly exposed by the able pen of Mrs. Webster; and it should certainly be well understood by everyone that the Bolshevik Revolution was the suppression of the democratic constitutional government set up by the Social Revolutionaries who were responsible for ending the Tsarist régime, and who undoubtedly represented the great majority in Russia. Your correspondent says, "Our only hope must rest in the National Party being strongly supported at the next General Election." Why not support this party now, and help it to continue the great fight which it, alone among political parties, has been so gallantly fighting against the highly subsidised agents of our enemies?

F. G. STONE.

JOURNALIST M.P.'S.

SIR,—The weakness of the present House of Commons has been exposed by "X.M.P." in your last issue of July 31st. Including a Speaker who has lost his independence, and always supports the Government in its suppressions and wild attempts to court popular favour, the House is so conscious of its impotence that its more fluent members go outside to get a hearing. They become journalists, a proceeding which seems calculated to reduce the little influence they still retain in the country. Mr. Winston Churchill, whose share in war disasters might, the ordinary man thinks, have led to a decent retirement for a while from public life, plies the pen busily, and gets large prices, it is reported, for his articles. So long as he holds a Government place of considerable emoluments, he might leave

journalists to manage their own business, and earn their own hard-won wage. But Ministers of to-day are all supermen, and, not content with mismanaging their own business in the House, must needs butt in, and take the bread out of other people's mouths. The scandalous lack of dignity of it all—that is what surprises me. How can our slangy Premier expect to be received with pleasure in any decent society of educated people? How can his gross exaggerations, meant for the many-headed, raise anything but a smile of ridicule among people of taste? Mr. Elihu Root spoke about Abraham Lincoln with the finish and polish of an American orator. The fact that the Americans beat us in this line was painfully exhibited by the display of Mr. Lloyd George which followed. He made a statement concerning the personality of Lincoln which every Englishman must know to be untrue, and which every American must know to be ridiculous. It is a pity that Mr. Bonar Law was not there to explain his exaggerations; he is so good at that; in fact, he seldom does anything else.

W. H. J.

THACKERAY AND DICKENS ON MEN-SERVANTS.

SIR.—Thank you for recalling the friends of my youth in your article on Dickens and Thackeray. Quotations from those two incomparable novelists always remind me of the raspberry tarts and Bath buns, which I used to devour before my appetite was ruined by modern and post-war muck. I once met a young man, not uneducated, who declared that he had never read a line of Thackeray, and didn't see why he should. I could have choked him with Garvice or Oppenheim!

But, despite of my admiration, I have an old standing quarrel with Dickens and Thackeray, viz., their persistent and vulgar sneers at domestic servants of the male sex. I, who am wearing my life out in squabbles with the modern half-naked lazy slut who replaces Mary Jane, cannot get either a butler or a footman. I am told that this is because domestic service is considered an unworthy occupation for a man. This is largely due to Thackeray and Dickens. "Jeames," "Yellowplush," "flunkey" were the everlasting labels which they chose to fasten on a very respectable and useful mode of livelihood. It is related in his biography that when Hawkins was standing for a borough—his only attempt to enter Parliament—a man, whom he recognised as a footman from the house where he was staying, interrupted him or asked a question. "John," answered Hawkins, "I think I hear the bell ring." And this is reported as a sample of Hawkins's wit! For myself I fail to see the joke. Thackeray and Dickens in their hey-day, before they came to want men-servants themselves, laboured this gibe incessantly. In truth there was a vein of vulgarity in both Thackeray and Dickens, more particularly the latter. We are to-day reaping the harvest of this ill-natured wit, levelled at what I maintain in all seriousness is a calling demanding more industry, sobriety and self-command than one meets with in the average trade unionist, with all his pretentiousness and class-consciousness.

W. J. ACHERLEY.

P.S.—On reading the above I think that Thackeray is a novelist for middle and old age rather than for youth, and I forgive my young ignoramus.

THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE.

SIR,—Among the sayings selected as notable in the Sunday press I find the following:—

"The best writer of a language is he who is familiar with none but his own.—*Lord Esher*."

You had a lively article a fortnight since concerning the degradation of English. Does Lord Esher show the more excellent way? Surely the people who improve the standard of writing are, and will be, people of education. They know what English words mean; they avoid the confusions of the ignorant; and they do not find it necessary to load their language with slang

and jargon just to make it vivid. The written word has not yet, I hope, passed entirely into the hands of the incompetent.

Lord Esher's dictum surprises me, as it stands. I do not know its context. Perhaps he was only leading up to a commendation of our English Bible—in the Authorised, not the Revised, Version—as a great source of English style. Lord Esher would appear to put the writing of Labour on a pinnacle it has never reached, and is never likely to reach. I can think of one or two writers, such as Bunyan and Cobbett, who might support his paradox. But the list on the other side! If Goldsmith, Swift, De Quincey, Lamb, Ruskin, Newman, Froude, Matthew Arnold, Stevenson are not among the best writers of English, we may as well burn all their books and the books written on them, and turn all the Professors and learned men who have studied English for a lifetime into the houses prepared for people with fond delusions. Or the workhouses might do: they are pretty near them already in this age of confident sciolists and commercial barbarians.

De gustibus, as *de ghostibus, non disputandum*; but, having spent the best part of my life in studying the writing of English, I really should like to know if I have been living in a fools' Paradise. Am I debarred from attempting to write well, just because I know a few other languages? Is it fatal for me to study the grace of French and Greek, and that sonorous dignity of Latin which nearly every man of letters admires? Has Mr. Smillie, say, a gross advantage over me, because he cares for none of these things?

In the SATURDAY REVIEW a mere Victorian can still be quoted. Matthew Arnold's 'Letters' include the following statements. Of French schools in 1865 he writes:—

"It is clear that Latin and Greek are cultivated almost entirely with a view to giving the pupil a mastery over his own language; a mastery which has always been the great object of intellectual ambition here, and which counts for more than a like mastery does with us. Perhaps, because it does not count for so much with us, a like mastery is, in fact, scarcely ever attained in England and certainly never at school."

In 1872 he writes to a correspondent who is quoted in 'Literature and Dogma':—

"Too much time is wasted over grammar, but it is true, as Goethe said, that no man who knows only his own language knows even that."

But perhaps our people write best when they know least. Happy barbarians, fortunate idlers, greatly gifted Philistines! Mr. Fisher's evening classes can dry up; Oxford can close—some other place will doubtless give the Labour Members learned degrees—Pelman's new French course can be shirked; and we teachers of English can retire to that total obscurity which I, for my part, have long meditated. If I could get somebody to bang me on the head in the right place, I might lose my memory, forget the other languages which handicap me, and start fair with the New English. Of course I might try my luck in Ireland before Mr. Lloyd George decides to mitigate the happy ferocity of that country. I should prefer that to intense study of the writings of Labour.

A MERE SPECIALIST.

THE M.C.C. TEAM FOR AUSTRALIA.

SIR,—I agree in the main with your correspondent of last week; but he does not mention the important point of fielding. It is much easier to make runs than to get people out or reduce their run-getting. Fortunately, such slackness as the older professionals showed in the field is not likely to be tolerated to-day. I would not admit any man, however sound a bat, to play for England who let the ball go through his legs to the boundary. Hendren and Hobbs are admirable fields as well as first-rate batsmen; and the latter is equally eminent as a cover-point and a batsman who can make the best bowling look foolish.

The tour, lasting from October to March, is enough to make any player just freed from a long season of county cricket feel tired; but England produces plenty

of young blood of the first-class for cricket, though it does not seem able to do it for lawn-tennis. I should have liked to see Mr. Donald Knight and Mr. G. E. C. Wood on the English side; but one can hardly expect a young man to give up an opening in life for cricket, which has never been a gentleman's profession, and in any case is one which lasts a short time—with the exception of that burly phenomenon, "W. G." The unreflecting people who write sporting chatter should realise that it is not the main business of the public schools and universities to produce champions at cricket, lawn tennis, or any other game.

In any team worth notice there is always a supply of good batsmen: the bowling is the question which causes anxiety, and particularly the fast bowling. Bowlers of this sort are rare, and do not last, as a rule, more than five years or so. At the present time I doubt if there are any great fast bowlers, either in England or Australia. But Howell made a good impression at Lord's in the recent match of Gentlemen v. Players. Like your correspondent, I do not know much about Barnes, and from what I have seen of him, am not inclined to put him on the pinnacle he appears to occupy. Parkin is certainly enterprising, and may, perhaps, go to Australia after all. His variety of pace is an asset, and, though his slow ball is hit freely, it will get people out. Mr. Fender is a welcome recruit—a keen man all round. His 50 at Lord's against the Players was most exhilarating. Mr. Douglas, too, is an all-rounder of ample experience. Woolley and Rhodes are great bowlers on a wet pitch; but Australian pitches are mostly dry. I wish that Hitch had been selected, for he is the keenest all-rounder I have seen of late years. Altogether, the team is sound throughout. If Australia still had Victor Trumper, they would be more formidable; but that greatest of modern batsmen died during the war.

ANOTHER CRICKETER.

THE MODERN MAID.

SIR.—A "Mother of Seven" seems lucky. My experience and that of countless others, is the same as yours. Perhaps "Mother of Seven" lives in the country, where apparently a few reasonable servants are still left. Anywhere near London they are as you describe. No one will do a single thing to help anyone else. They are rude, and dishonest, and, as they can apparently get another situation without a character (owing to the mass of foreigners and Colonials who pour in on us and take all the servants at any price), they make no endeavour to please or behave themselves.

I wonder it has not before now been commented on, that half our troubles are due to all the foreigners permitted in our midst. They take the houses, servants, keep up prices and do incalculable mischief. This country is the dumping ground for the whole world. Why, after this terrible war, cannot we try and recover by keeping what we have got to ourselves, instead of sharing it with every possible alien?

"MOTHER OF FIVE."

AUTHORS AND REMAINDERS.

SIR.—I suggest that authors would do well in looking after their books at the period when they are remaindered, and seeing that they get duly paid what is their due for the transaction. When their book has ceased to sell at the original price, they forget that it has still another, if a sadly diminished, life. They should ask their publishers to tell them when their books are on the point of being thus sold, as they might well like to secure some for themselves or their friends, instead of paying the increase of price which the second-hand bookseller adds.

Some remainders, of course, do not deserve to remain at all. It was a pleasure (and one you will share) to read in Mr. Shane Leslie's book of reminiscences that his grandmother bought up and burnt the remainder of Lady Cardigan's disgusting memoirs.

AN AUTHOR.

REVIEWS

EXPERIMENTS IN DEMOCRACY.

Real Democracy in Operation. By Felix Bonjour, translated by C. L. Leese. Allen and Unwin. 7s. 6d. net.

SWITZERLAND is the historic nursery of democracy, and it is quite fitting that experiments should be tried in that small and in some respects primitive area. The population of Switzerland is about half that of London, and about equal to that of Ireland or Scotland. Outside the cities, Geneva, Basle, Zurich, and Berne, the Swiss are remarkable for simplicity of mind and character, and both in the cities and in the provincial cantons they are perhaps the most argumentative people on earth. With these characteristics and inside of the ring-fence of their mountains, experiments in government may be made safely, which in larger communities would lead to explosion. Switzerland is in short a kind of political laboratory; and every practical man is familiar with the danger of translating laboratory results into the commerce of the world.

With this caution we recommend those who are interested in the theory and art of modern politics to read this volume of Mr. Felix Bonjour with attention, even though they may be bored occasionally with its inevitable parochiality. By the way, do we need translations of French books? The work is very well done here: but French is a clearer language than English for complicated subjects: and surely the people who are likely to read the translation are capable of reading the original.

The Swiss have adopted, intermittently for the last half century, the modern expedients for carrying out what the British Labour Party are clumsily trying to effect by what they call Direct Action. Unlimited democracy always has been, is, and always will be, suspicious and distrustful of those whom it has elected to govern for ever so short a period. The British working men, or some of them, are certain that they could govern better than the Cabinet and Parliament: but their way of expressing their views is by depriving their fellow-citizens of coal and railways. The Swiss are more reasonable. They have adopted the referendum, the initiative, and the recall. By a petition, signed by a small number of electors, any law or decree passed by the Federal or Cantonal legislature or Council (the latter corresponding to a County or Municipal Council) must be referred back to the electors for ratification or rejection, by a prescribed majority. Again by a petition, any law or regulation may be drafted by the electors themselves (often a small minority) and presented to the Central or local legislature for adoption in the shape of a law. Once more, by a signed petition any officer's appointment may be subjected to a popular ballot, which either dismisses or retains him. It thus follows that the legislative, and, administrative acts of the governing bodies and the appointment of executive officers are subject at any moment to revocation by the electors, and that the electors have a competitive legislative power, which may, and often does, conflict with the legislation of the elected governments. M. Bonjour is the enthusiastic advocate of these strange devices, which he maintains, though not very clearly, are not abused by the Swiss people. But then, it must be repeated, Switzerland is small, and its inhabitants are phlegmatic and honest. In the State of Oregon, U.S.A., the referendum, initiative and recall are all in operation, we believe with very unsatisfactory results. Two or three objections are obvious. A great deal of the people's time must be spent in propaganda, and discussion and balloting. No really busy nation could afford the time for vetoing or making laws of their own; and no public official would dare to do his duty. In a large and complicated society competing legislation would result in absolute anarchy. In Oregon one law gave a company the right to fish in a river which another law took away. We have only sketched in the barest outline the Swiss system, having no space for more. There is some-

thing to be said for the referendum: we can see nothing in favour of the initiative (which would be impracticable on a large scale), or for the recall, which would place every public servant at the mercy of his private enemies. However absurd these devices may seem, if proposed for application to a large State, they deserve close study, for in that direction modern democracy is tending. Representative government is discredited, and some modification of the referendum, possibly even of the initiative, would be more sensible, and less harmful, than "direct action" by means of strikes.

"A VERY PERFECT GENTLEMAN."

R.F.C. H.Q. 1914-1918. By Maurice Baring. Bell. 8s. net.

IF anybody is still thinking of publishing a book about the War, we should tender him the classical advice of *Punch* to those about to marry, Don't. In ten years' time or twenty, the appetite for details of the Great War may revive: but to-day it is satisfied to repletion. This fact does not prevent the volume before us from being an interesting and well-written narrative, as, indeed, it is bound to be, being the work of a practised and popular pen.

Mr. Maurice Baring's account of his life at the Headquarters of the Royal Flying Corps (as it was then called) under Generals Henderson and Trenchard, must be of surpassing value and attraction to all airmen. But it is too technical for the general public, and Mr. Baring does not relieve his solid pudding with enough plums of personal anecdote. Mr. Baring has a tantalising way of telling us, "Mr. Asquith came to-day," or "The King visited us yesterday," or "Belloc arrived to dinner to-night," or "Lord Roberts turned up this morning," or "Dined with Sir John French," without telling us a word of what these interesting personages said, or how they looked. As no one is more capable than Mr. Baring of giving us portraits of celebrities, we must suppose that he thought it would be "bad form," or a breach of confidence, to repeat anything heard at H.Q. No doubt he is right: only it makes his book rather dull. In only two instances does Mr. Baring forget his reticence, and in both cases the men are dead. We have already quoted in a previous issue what Mr. Baring writes about Raymond Asquith. What he says about Lord Lucas is well worth reading, though we have only space for a few lines here. "Bron was a wanderer by nature; his heart was above all things adventurous, and he went on seeking and finding adventures in spite of every handicap, in spite of circumstances, till he met with his last adventure fighting in the sky on his last errand. At Oxford he had rowed two years in the 'Varsity boat. He went out to the South African War, as *Times* correspondent, where he was wounded. The wound, although not serious in itself, was followed by disastrous consequences and complications, and finally he was obliged to have his leg cut off, and for many months he was seriously ill. One would have thought this was the end of active out-of-door life and physical adventure, but not at all. He was soon as active as ever, and rode and hunted and shot. Just before the War began he had a bad fall in a steeple-chase. When the War broke out he was a Cabinet Minister, and I think the most difficult sacrifice he had to make in his life was not to throw up his work as a civilian and go out to France at once directly war broke out, or at least prepare to go out." In May, 1915, came the crisis over munitions and the Coalition. Lord Lucas was one of those who resigned to make way for Unionists, and in July he went to Gosport to learn to be an observer in the Flying Corps. These last weeks in France were, perhaps, the happiest of his life. He was an undergraduate once more and an active soldier, as active, as athletic in the air as he had ever been on the ground. His youth had been given back to him with interest, and for his disabilities he had received a glorious compensation. Apart from the work and his interest and whole-hearted keenness in the War, in his squadron, in his mechanics, and in his machine, he enjoyed himself with all the great gift of enjoyment and

fund of gaiety with which he had enjoyed everything else in his life: his houses, his fishing, his pony-hunts, his steeplechases, his horses, his pictures, his dinner-parties, the performances of the *Follies*, or as long ago, the days of strenuous rowing or idle punting on the river at Oxford, and the musical supper-parties at King Edward Street. "Lord Lucas was shot in the neck, but managed to land his machine and observer safely, though unconscious. He was buried at Bapaume in November, 1916. He was a Herbert, and recovered an old peerage, long in abeyance: "bon sang ne peut mentir." His death was the most fitting crown to the example of his life.

THE MEANNESS OF IT!

The War Diary of a Square Peg. By M. A. Mügge. Routledge. 10s. 6d. net.

THIS 'Diary' is a very different sort of war book from Mr. Baring's. It is the record of the experience in the ranks of what the Americans call a "hyphenate." Mr. Mügge, being an accomplished man of letters who was in 1914 writing a book on Folk-Lore, left his books and volunteered to fight for England. But having a German name, and being of German descent, he was, after risking his life in the trenches, sent back together with a great many other young men to a camouflaged camp at home for conscientious objectors. This incredible meanness was perpetrated by our military authorities at the request, or rather at the command, of the French generals! Had we not read it in this book, we should have refused to believe that our generals could have been guilty of such despicable ingratitude and cowardice. Some of the young men so returned to herd with "Conscies" had been wounded at the front: others, being too old or too infirm to fight, had lost their sons in the war! Now we hold that the men who volunteered, as distinguished from those who were conscripted, were the real and only heroes. Yet these men, who had left their comfortable homes and prosperous affairs, for most of them belonged to the professional and commercial class, and offered their lives for the country which their fathers or grandfathers had adopted, were actually dismissed and sent home to the indignity of a C.O. Camp. Not so did the Americans treat their hyphenates; they welcomed their allegiance and offer of service, though, of course, it must be remembered that citizens of German origin are a very much larger proportion of the American population than of the British. Had the Americans treated their hyphenates as we treated ours, a quarter of the American army would have been sent back. But by the time the Americans arrived the French were in no position to make demands of that kind, nor would the Americans have complied.

We don't wonder that Mr. Mügge is embittered: but apart from his grievance, he has written a very amusing account of Tommy's habits and "slanguage," a word for which we thank this philologist. He has indeed given us a glossary at the end of the volume of army slang, which is instructive and entertaining. Mr. Mügge thinks that Tommy is a very good fellow, and the filthiness of his talk is merely due to a defective vocabulary and a want of imagination. Of the War Office he thinks what we suppose all men think, that it is dilatory, pompous, and wasteful.

HISTORY WITHOUT TEARS.

The Teaching of History. By E. L. Hasluck. Cambridge University Press. 8s. net.

SHORT as is the title of this little book, it contains two words of good omen to all who persist in hoping for the improvement of the world. No one, we think, who can speak with authority, will seriously deny that both the science of teaching and the science of history are now understood and studied in a better spirit than at any period of which we have record. As regards teaching, this will be obvious to everyone familiar with the methods obtaining in public and private instruction even within the last hundred years, and with the results which they produced. Even a casual ob-

server must acknowledge the accurate and many-sided investigation now brought to bear throughout the whole field of human history, and the enlargement of view which has attended it. To say that the slap-dash cock-sureness of a Macaulay would be impossible to an historian of any account at the present day is saying little. The more subtle partizanship which a Hume or a Gibbon masked under the specious semblance of philosophical indifference is equally a thing of the past. Periods of great importance in the development of civilisation can no longer be massed together as Dark Ages deserving from the enlightened modern no more than a sneer of pity. For this particular reform we have, possibly, in the first instance to thank Carlyle—a service worthy to be balanced against that glorification of ruffianly efficiency to which Mr. Hasluck in his introduction aptly refers. For evidence of the more tolerant and veracious spirit in which even the history of the moment is actually written, we should perhaps not be well advised in referring to the current literature of economics or military affairs, though even here it would be possible to contend that there is an advance on the practice of earlier generations. But in another province of human affairs, it is at least remarkable that an assembly representing an extreme section of the English Church should recently have been described by the recognised organ of the faction directly opposed, in terms of almost enthusiastic commendation, and on the ground especially, of freedom from the *odium theologicum*.

On the study of history, and the study of teaching as applied thereto, Mr. Hasluck writes as an expert, and on the excellent principle of continually testing each theory by its application in practice, restricts himself almost wholly to the case of secondary schools, which will not surprise us, when we consider the difficulties attending historical teaching in those of a lower grade. We cannot truthfully say that his tractate can be described as "bright" or "chatty." (We defend our use of the latter term on the ground that he has himself employed it, in defining a quality at which teachers should aim). We have some qualms of conscience about conferring upon it the universal adjective "interesting." For the class for which it is primarily intended, however, i.e., historical teachers, it will certainly have an interest, if only for its enumeration of all the more approved methods now adopted in their especial field. For Mr. Hasluck, though he pays convention the pious tribute of a lamentation over the tendency to make lessons too enjoyable, shows himself quite as keen as anyone on working towards that result, which is perhaps neither a very imminent, nor a very terrible danger.

His suggestion that school essays should take the form of imaginary letters between historical characters is, we think, only open to objection, when the given date would require English of a more or less archaic description. It would be a pity for young people to acquire the habit of writing a jargon such as is found in many so-called historical novels. Mr. Hasluck's recommendation that teachers should employ their leisure in composing plays to illustrate some striking event in the past is not (dare we say it?) entirely exempt from the same risk. But for all that, it is a fascinating notion, and more feasible than might at first sight appear. The human desire to see our ideas represented in action cannot be wanting to members of the teaching profession. And here would be a chance to have them carried out in dramatic form, and with a loyalty little known outside the world of school—the loyalty of pupils to a popular master, or mistress. Drawing and modelling, again, as adjuncts to history lessons, would appeal strongly to nature, with a bent, like Tom Tulliver's, for the practical. But we do not know

whether our pacifists would approve the copying of siege engines for that end. For the guillotine, we would advise that a preliminary visit to Mme. Tussaud's Chamber of Horrors should be numbered among the sight-seeing expeditions which form part of Mr. Hasluck's scheme.

Where there is life, there is hope. And even the formal categories of this handbook bear witness to a vitality, widespread and abounding in promise

VULGAR WITHOUT BEING FUNNY.

Stories from the Old Testament. By L. Pearsall Smith. Hogarth Press. 4s. 6d. net.

M. R. SMITH in his preface states that he has tried to re-write and re-interpret some of the best-known Old Testament stories in the light of modern research. He remarks that the recent increase in our knowledge of Biblical history has altered our views, and it is therefore his "earnest hope" that "a simple, reverent, but at the same time more modern and psychological portrayal of these hallowed incidents may be helpful to . . . not only the child in the nursery or the Sunday School, but the parent and instructor as well." Either this is humbug, or it is nonsense; either Mr. Smith is a knave, or he is very, very simple.

Why anyone should ever take it upon themselves to re-write Bible stories at all is to us unintelligible; nothing could be more simple or magnificent than the language of the Bible itself. No "Peep of Dawn" or "Half Hours in Holy Land" can ever do better than spoil what it sets out to improve. But when a collection of so-called stories from the Old Testament is published which, in addition to being badly written, is moreover profane and untrue, it is time that steps were taken to discredit it. This paragraph:—

"'Connu! Connu!' David had laughed, 'slaying Giants and marrying King's daughters—why, all that's as old as my hat!' This remark had attracted the attention of Ahab, his eldest brother. 'What are you doing here?' Ahab shouted. 'Looking for copy are you? I'll give you copy, you bloody little ——'"

Is this a "simple and reverent portrayal" of a "hallowed incident"? Or again—

"And—could she believe it?—he had thrown off his royal garments, and was leaping and gyrating in public with practically nothing on but a pair of white spats! The cultivated young Queen felt she had never beheld so shocking a spectacle. 'That's what comes,' she bitterly reflected, 'of marrying out of one's own class.'"

Is this "helpful to the child in the nursery or the Sunday School"? Is a reference to Jonah as "a little man with a retreating chin who played ping-pong with his children"; or the flaming anachronisms contained in the mention of trams and cinemas and gin palaces (*sic!*) in Nineveh; or the absurd introduction of British Tommies singing a song about "pubs" and lady-typists, and *Gottstrafe-Kanaan*, into the story of the spies who went forward into the Promised Land; or the bad taste displayed in the telling of the tale of Bathsheba—are these means calculated to make us arrive, as the author professes to wish us to arrive, "at a more historical and just appreciation" of the Old Testament? Or what possible advantage can there be in making Moses quote Horace, or David's wife speak French? And on what grounds can the author justify the inclusion of foreign languages, dead or modern, in stories which, he "earnestly hopes," will be of use to the children in the nursery?

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Of course, we understand what Mr. Smith has been trying to do; we realise that he has been attempting to pull our legs by being cheaply clever. We know that, when he reads this review of his book, he will smile a smile of self-satisfaction, and say to himself, "Aha! He has taken me seriously!" We have indeed taken him seriously; yet not because we think he means what he says, but because he does not seem to know what he is saying. We take him seriously because he is so devoid of good taste and manners, that he fails to realise what bad form is this cheap flashing of paste-diamonds, and what offence and mystification it must cause to any poor child who may be unfortunate enough to come across it.

We might conceivably pardon the profanity and what amounts, when we realise that it is intended for the ears of children, to the indecency of the thing, if only it were clever or funny. But what humour! What brilliance! How astutely has the author contrived to pull young innocents' legs! We are reminded of the merriment which Johnson found mighty offensive. It is neither necessary, nor desirable, to choose Old Testament History for children as a medium for facetiousness. But perhaps Mr. Smith is less familiar with the New Testament than with the Old, and has forgotten the references therein to a millstone in relation to the treatment of children.

Fortunately, however, few are likely to expend four and sixpence on such a collection of "funniosities."

A SPANIARD'S VIEW OF GERMANS.

Mare Nostrum. By Vicente Ibañez, translated by Charlotte Jordan. Constable. 9s. net.

FROM the author of 'The Four Horses of the Apocalypse' much is expected, and the novel-reader will not be disappointed. Señor Ibañez seems to be as much at home on the Mediterranean, "our sea," as on an Argentine estancia, and the story of the youth and upbringing of Captain Ulysses Ferragut is admirable. The empire of Spain has passed away so long ago that we are apt to forget its glories, and the fact that Spain was once as much entitled to be called Mistress of the Seas as England is to-day. The Spanish are a proud nation, and live much on tradition. They can't ignore the shrinkage of their empire: but they look upon the Mediterranean as "Mare Nostrum" still. Judging from this novel, which contains a great deal of historical information, as well as description of Spanish sea-port manners, there must be many fine sailors amongst the Spaniards. The German spy, incarnated in a lovely woman or a proud German officer, is as threadbare a theme for a novel as can be found: it is worn very thin indeed. Yet it is not amiss to have it treated by a Spanish pen.

Ferragut, the young master of a tramp-steamer, small but swift, called the 'Mare Nostrum,' gets entrapped at Naples by a siren, as Nelson was before him. The enchantress is a German spy, and she is assisted by an "aunt," and a haughty German officer, all in disguise. Ferragut is persuaded by them to take on board his boat oil cans to supply with petrol the German submarines in the Mediterranean. One of the submarines torpedoes a steamer in which Ferragut's only son, the apple of his eye, is returning to Spain. Ferragut, dedicating his life to revenge, happens on the haughty German officer disguised and hanging about the docks at Marseilles. The Spanish captain denounces him and gets him shot. Ferragut then becomes a marked man, to be hunted by the irresistible world-organisation of the Kaiser. He sells his boat, at a fabulous price, to the French Government, remaining as captain to make voyages to and from Salonica with arms and provisions. On one of these voyages the 'Mare Nostrum' is torpedoed by the Germans, and Captain Ferragut drowns with the rest. The *leit motif* of the book is that the Kaiser is, or was, as unescapable as Caesar in the Roman world. The character of the superstitious old ship's-cook, Ferragut himself, the female spy, who is tried and shot in Paris, the fuelling of the German submarines in mid-sea—all these are described with a power which few novelists of to-day can achieve.

A VIRGINIAN MYSTIC.

Michael Forth. By Mary Johnston. Constable. 9s. net.

MARY JOHNSTON'S fine record in the field of historic romance, has scarcely prepared us for the very different line adopted in this imaginary autobiography. Its hero, the child of a Virginian family impoverished by "the war," relates his own history, at first in a purely reminiscent form. But the narrative, as it advances, becomes more and more a chronicle of outward rather than inward experience, and develops at last into the exposition of a mystical system to which the author's adhesion is tacitly implied. We confess to our belief that she has set forth her best wine at the beginning. We have a beautiful picture of Michael's childhood in the old, dilapidated house with mother, aunt and grandmother (his father has been killed in battle), and a few faithful, though emancipated, darkies—all charming people in their different ways. Despite shabby clothes and lack of spending money, the boy finds life good. For his elders, doubtless, it is a sombre business enough, but the shadow is not allowed to rest upon him. Our interest is still maintained when he leaves home for an uncle's house, to share with his cousins in the lessons of a wonderful cosmopolitan instructress. His subsequent career at Hill Top Academy with its old-world religious atmosphere, has also features that attract us. But from this point onward our attention slackens. We are lost amid the mazes of what in our ignorance we are tempted to call, now Monism, now Pantheism, and now again Transcendentalism. Yet through all we are conscious of a grasp on great issues, a deep concern for humanity, and a rooted hope alike for the race and the individual which go a long way towards justifying opinions tending to induce them.

OLD CAPE TOWN.

The Tavern. By René Juta. Heinemann. 7s. net.

THIS story of Cape Town a hundred years ago has sufficient merit to make us wish that it had still more. There is a true romantic flavour about some of the incidents, whether they are entirely the work of the author's imagination or have, as she hints, a basis in historic fact. The local colouring bears testimony to an intimate familiarity with racial and topographical characteristics and traditions. The language and spirit of a bygone day are sometimes effectively suggested. But we are repelled by the general crudeness of style, and deficiencies in construction, and by mannerisms which, be they natural or assumed, are the reverse of pleasing.

A MINSTREL'S STORY.

Beau Regard. By Dorothy Brendon. Melrose. 6s. net.

ENGLAND in the reign of Henry the Second is the scene of Miss Brendon's romance. Becket and Rosamond, though much discussed, do not appear on the stage, nor does Henry himself. But Eleanor, represented in an unusually sympathetic light, plays an important part. As sovereign of Guienne, she extends the hospitality of her English court to Beau Regard, otherwise Pepin, a youthful troubadour, who is straightway involved in a network of private and political intrigues. His personal charm exposes him to the unlawful overtures of a great lady, as vicious as she is unattractive, and his moral principles, though none of the strongest, being proof against this temptation, the rejected one then seeks revenge by exploiting his knowledge of an accidentally discovered State secret. His salvation, temporal and spiritual, is achieved by a maiden, pure and proud, who on her side becomes human under his influence, and after several thrilling adventures, they are happily married. In playing freely with historical facts, Miss Brendon only exercises a novelist's undoubted right, and a right which she has turned to good account. She has been less successful in dealing with the problem of language.

In dialogue, even when, as here, we must assume that we are reading it in a translation, a touch of archaism is necessitated by the fitness of things. But with Scott, Kingsley, and some others, we hold that this is out of place in the narrative portion of the story, and especially so when a narrator moralises on the cruelty and licentiousness of bygone days, and her heroine's superiority to both.

THE MAGAZINES

THE NINETEENTH this month makes a general appeal, and has very few articles of purely literary interest. Mr. M. H. Jerome writes an appreciation of Stephen Phillips. His was a career of sudden success, as sudden extinction, and a slow return to recognition cut short by death. He had a magnetic personality and a maddening dislike to writing letters. There is no doubt that some of his later work is better than his early successes. Mr. Wakefield discourses pleasantly of the Royal Hospital burial ground, and of some of those who lie there, among them Dr. Burney and Cheselden, the famous surgeon. Mr. Walbrook writes of William Warren Vernon under the title of 'Taking the Theatre Seriously,' and indicates the want that prevents any real advance in the standard of English acting. We have no leisured and educated class of dilettantes who understand what is happening on the stage, and are powerful and independent enough to impress on the manager the necessity of good acting as against merely costly production. We constantly see first-class actors in England engaged in shipshod work which would ensure their being driven from the stage in Paris. Mr. A. W. Dell has a pleasant account of 'Corfu and its Birds,' and Col. Verner relates some conversations with the Empress Eugénie during the Great War. Mrs. Hinkley protests against the State endowment of motherhood on sentimental grounds—as strong an argument as the actual economic ones which render it impossible. Mrs. Bell gives a new side of war experience—those of the womankind of our Indian troops, and Mr. James Rhoades, in a striking copy of verses, 'Emeriti nos implorant,' pleads the cause of the maimed soldiers who have fought for us. Mr. Shaw Sparrow unmasks the reasons for 'The Disastrous Need of Men in March, 1918,' and Sir Henry Rew examines 'The Prospect of a World Famine.' This he considers unlikely. "If the inducement is offered, there is no reasonable doubt that adequate supplies of cereal food will be forthcoming for an indefinite period." But prices will be considerably higher.

THE FORTNIGHTLY is an exceptionally brilliant number this month. Modesty forbids us to do more than mention 'Disraeli's Triple Crown' by the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW, but, apart from that, Mr. Max Beerbohm's 'No. 2 The Pines' would confer distinction on the best number of any magazine that has ever appeared. We find ourselves for once in whole-hearted agreement with the critical judgment of Mr. Edmund Gosse in declining to make use of it for his volume on Swinburne: it would have killed the rest of the book. 'Max' has an uncanny power of recalling and picturing a scene in all its essentials, and these interviews with Swinburne are exactly right and just in the devotion which every craftsman ought to feel to a master in his craft. Miss Arnold gives us an account of 'Rhoda Broughton as I Knew Her,' also tinged with hero-worship, in the course of her career between being the Zola of English fiction and its re-incarnated Miss Yonge. Certainly to settle in Oxford after writing 'Belinda' was a bold adventure. Miss Underhill, in 'A Modern Saint,' recounts the life of Mlle. Thérèse Martin, who entered the Carmelites at fifteen, and died in 1897 at twenty-four of consumption. She worked miracles, and even, it is said, "appeared at the British Headquarters, and gave advice at a critical moment of the campaign." Now we know! Prof. Jean Allary gives us an analysis of the chief dramas of M. Henry Bernstein, and shows that his main idea is a worship of strength. The plays are nearly all pictures of a struggle between two classes of characters: they are vigorous, but they are not fine. Mrs. Ariss writes pleasantly and ungrammatically about 'New Girls and Old Ladies.' Capt. Usher's 'Occasional Notes' deal with democracy as it is seen in the United States, Russia, and at home, and Mr. Frederic Harrison has some weighty remarks on the consequences that will follow the extinction of a wealthy middle class.

BLACKWOOD opens with the story of the most magnificent hoax of recent years—one which, not unprovoked, took in the English-speaking world for a day or two, and the American public for some weeks. The Jews of Newark (N.J.) had got 'The Merchant of Venice' withdrawn from the school course, and had otherwise made themselves ridiculous, so our young friends promptly invented a League of Scottish Veterans of the World War, and a resolution demanding the suppression of Macbeth. Mr. Leonard tells of an amusing day with the Turkish rebels, Prof. Strahan recounts the story of 'Swift and Ireland,' and Mr. Whitley reviews the Life of Disraeli. A ghost-story and the account of a Japanese student are quite good.

CORNHILL includes, as well as its two serials, some good short stories and sketches. Mr. Lloyd Sanders has a first-rate account of 'D'Artagnan and Milady,' who is identified with Lady Carlisle. Mr. Letts from some old diaries tells of 'Three Foreigners in London, 1584-1618.' One of them gives an account of the theatres of the day. Mr. F. K. Ward describes the Nahrwan Canal, a gigantic main-cut of the irrigation system of Mesopotamia.

THE MUSICAL QUARTERLY (New York) is, as usual, full of good things. Mr. Fuller-Maitland opens with a discussion of the difficulties musicians have in appreciating new methods. Mr. Herbert Ancliffe describes 'The Effect of the War on English Choral Music,' Mr. Sumner Salter writes on 'The Ornaments in Bach's Organ Works' in total ignorance of Mr. Arnold Dolmetsch's very complete study of the subject in his book on the interpretation of seventeenth and eighteenth century music. Mr. C. A. Harris has an amusing and well-illustrated account of Musical Animals in Ornament from the Canterbury Crypt and a number of illuminated manuscripts. The number of such drawings, in fourteenth century work especially, is enormous. Mrs. Patterson of Cork has a learned article on Irish Folk-Music, which takes the "Tuatha De Danaan" as historical people.

THE NATIONAL REVIEW is rather short of literary articles, instead of which we have a belabouring of Mr. H. E. M. Stutfield by the Rev. R. P. Garrold, S.J., for misrepresenting Roman Catholic teaching. No doubt Mr. Stutfield will have something to say for himself—we see several promising openings—but this month he is telling the story of an unfortunate 'Chamois-Hunter.' A Victim writes of 'An Anomalous Profession,' which is that of Assistant Master in a private school. Among the political articles is one by the Earl of Arran on 'The Future'—of Ireland.

THE ANGLO-FRENCH REVIEW contains a vigorous attack on 'The Nostrum of Nationalization' by Mr. Maitland Davidson with arguments good and bad, a very readable account of the effect of The Revolution Society of London, among whose members were Lord Stanhope and Dr. Richard Price, on the French of Strasbourg. Dr. Price as a Unitarian Minister was in sympathy with revolution everywhere, but his chief claim to remembrance is that his system was the type of modern intuitional ethics. Rowland Grey writes pleasantly of the esteem in which our early women writers are held by French critics, and Lord Charnwood continues his papers on Abraham Lincoln. The poetry includes a long piece by Paul Fort, 'Les Amants du Bois-Loriot,' and there is some good occasional verse.

THE QUARTERLIES

The current QUARTERLY is an extremely well-balanced number, the balance leaning, as is but just, to the side of literature. The first paper is by Lord Esher on Beaconsfield, an appreciation of the closing stages of his career rather than a review of the concluding volumes of the 'Life.' It is a quite good notice, but one of the phrases, torn from its context, is quite unfortunate, to say the least, "The best writer of a language is he who is familiar with none but his own." In English there is no prominent prose writer, except Bunyan and Cobbett, of whom this could be said, and these would hardly be cited as the best examples of English prose. After all, Lord Esher was only making a courtier-like excuse for Queen Victoria's prose style. "We authors," Disraeli could write, and his style needs no excuse. Mrs. Strong has an illuminating article on the Greek portrait statues in the British Museum, in which attention is directed to the fact that the whole body was the unit of portraiture; a bust in the best times was a meaningless mutilation. Lord Ernle writes agreeably on 'The Golden Ass of Apuleius' without attempting to add anything to the discussion of his works—there is so little fresh to be said on the subject. The essayist does not mention the Hermetic works, the influence of which on renaissance thought was very great. Prof. Conway's lecture at the Roman Society on Dido is slightly recast and expanded, and the whole story brought to a cry of wonder and pity for the mystery of life. Mr. Cecil Headlam writes on the Censorship of the Press, and raises a hope that some day a good staff volume founded on the Archives of the Press Bureau will form the basis for the guidance of journalists in the next war to end war. Mrs. Woods is pleasing on 'Mrs. Humphry Ward,' and Mrs. Wharton on 'The Letters of Henry James.' Dr. Maret has a most valuable paper on 'Primitive Relationships,' and 'The C'néma' as the Infant Phenomenon, receives a not unfriendly handling from Mr. Clayton.

In the EDINBURGH REVIEW there is a notable article on 'The Agrarian Movement in Canada' by J. A. Stevenson, a well-known publicist of Toronto. As in Britain, the two old political

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parties in Canada, Conservative and Liberal, have been practically destroyed by the shock of war, which has necessitated a Coalition with the vices of both parties and the virtues of neither. Added to which, Sir Wilfred Laurier, the Liberal leader, has died, and the Conservative leader Sir Robert Borden has retired. The new Agrarian party is a revolt of the Western farmers against the manufacturers, the politicians, the priests, the middlemen, of the Eastern cities. The Farmers' programme is free trade and Co-operation. The Agrarians have already fluttered the doves of Ottawa, and whether they will ultimately succeed in forming a party and a Government must depend on whether they can or will coalesce with Labour. Mr. T. E. C. Crerar is their most probable leader. Lord Midleton's article on 'The Gallipoli Expedition,' written with the experience of a War Secretary, bears somewhat heavily on the reputation of Lord Kitchener, for absorbing all power in his own hands, for forcing generals on Sir Ian Hamilton, for refusing aeroplanes, and reinforcements, though on the latter head he excuses him by reason of the heavy demands of the Western front. "Probably no commander ever entered on an expedition with the dice so loaded against him." Lord Midleton severely censures Lord Haldane and the Asquith Cabinet for having made no preparations between 1911-14 to meet their engagement with France. The Editor's article on War and Population is a trenchant indictment of the high birth-rate madmen, and practically confirms Dean Inge's views. Eliminating dynastic ambition and religion, as no longer causes of war, Mr. Cox reduces them to economic rivalry, which is produced by growth of population. Mr. Hagberg Wright's article on the German War Spirit states the case for Germanism as well as it can be done.

THE SCOTTISH HISTORICAL REVIEW opens with an account of 'Dunstaffnage Castle on Loch Etive near Oban. It is a fifteenth century building, finally burnt down in 1810. The author, Mr. Macphail, has identified the early site of the fortified mound which preceded it, and the dedication of the chapel to St. Maelrubbha. Sir Bruce Seton on 'The Distaff Side' shows how annulment of marriage provided a handy substitute for free divorce in pre-Reformation times—one of his examples being that Earl of Huntly whose surrender of his dignities in 1449 is likely to lead to a peerage case in the near future. Miss Steuart writes on 'Scots Pearls,' whose vogue is almost forgotten to-day, Sir J. B. Paul continues his illustrations of Life in Scotland from the notarial records, and Mr. W. M. Dixon reviews 'The Navy in the Great War.' The Notes deal with the name of Macbeth, and the Printers to Glasgow University. A very good number of a review indispensable to specialists.

HISTORY leads off with a paper on 'History and Ethnology' by Dr. Rivers, explaining modern methods in anthropology, which will be of use to historical students in the way of opening up new vistas. The methods applicable to Melanesia to-day are also applicable to the Stonehenge builders, or the people of the Central Asian buried civilisations. Prof. Armstrong's lecture on Machiavelli is valuable. The 'Historical Revisions' this time are 'The Petition of Right' and 'The Balance of Power.' The author does not tell us how the Petition of Right was enrolled on the Statute Roll—perhaps she did not think of looking at it—few people do, but it might tell something. The formula of acceptance was surely an antiquarian revival.

SCIENCE PROGRESS has for its popular article a very readable account of some new suggestions as to 'The Evolution of Man' by Dr. Cherry. Mr. Bradford gives a good summary of 'Langmuir's Theory of the Arrangement of Electrons in Atoms and Molecules,' and Mr. Badcock is not illuminating on 'The Significance of Facial Beauty.' The Notes are, as usual, marked strongly by the editor's personality, and the reviews are good. There is a lively correspondence section in which views orthodox and the contrary are allowed free expression.

THE CHURCH QUARTERLY REVIEW is more or less concerned in every paper with aspects of the question of reunion. The Scottish Episcopacy, the English and Norwegian Churches, Anglicanism and Lutheranism, and the Roman Catholic view. The Rev. W. H. Frere describes, favourably, 'The New South African Liturgy.'

OUR LIBRARY TABLE

REPUTATIONS: ESSAYS IN CRITICISM, by Douglas Goldring (Chapman and Hall, 7s. 6d. net.) In this book the author once more gives proof of his remarkable receptivity, his power of seizing and reproducing the surface impressions of the circle in which he moves. That there is nothing either well-thought-out or valuable in these essays is hardly so much his fault as his misfortune. The lighter sketches are incomparably the better, and should prove to him his true vocation.

A HISTORY OF THE VENERABLE ENGLISH COLLEGE, ROME, by Cardinal Gasquet (Longmans, 16s. net) is the story of a foundation which in its present form dates from 1580, but which has its roots in the visits of Anglo-Saxon pilgrims to Rome. Its author tells his story with his accustomed mastery of style and sympathy with his subject, and makes a very interesting record of the vicissitudes of fortune through which the College has passed. It is not his fault if much of his space is taken up with its struggles to preserve a distinctive character of its own, and that the record, as a whole, will appeal to a limited audience; on the other hand, a considerable section will appeal as much to the general reader as to the student of the attempt at the re-conversion of England. The book is very well illustrated and printed.

MISCELLANEOUS ADVERTISEMENTS.

BOOKS.

BOOKS RARE AND OUT OF PRINT.—Hoppé's Studies from the Russian Ballet, 15 beautiful Studies, 6s., pub. 21s.; Encyclopædia Britannica, India paper, last edition, 29 vols., £45; Rabelais' Works, 5 vols., 1901, 21s.; Thornton's Americanisms; An American Glossary, 2 vols., 7s. 6d., pub. 30s. 1912; Henry's Finger Prints, 2s. 6d.; Thackeray's Works, 26 vols., Caxton Pub. Co., £4 4s.; George Eliot's Works, 26 vols., "Standard" Edition, £5 5s.; Boccaccio's Decameron, illus. by Louis Chalon, 2 vols., 30s.; Story of the Nations, 65 vols., fine set, £10 10s.; Drawings by Old Masters at Chatsworth, pub. £21, price £10 10s.; 19 Early Drawings by Aubrey Beardsley, only 150 done, 35s.; Balzac's Droll Stories, illus., 11s.; Salome, illus. by Beardsley, 11s.; Ballads Weird and Wonderful, with 25 drawings by Vernon Hill, 9s.; Aubrey Beardsley, by Arthur Symons, large paper copy, 1905, £2 2s. Send also for Catalogue, 100,000 bargains on hand. If you want a book, and have failed to find it elsewhere, try me. EDWARD BAKER'S GREAT BOOKSHOP, 14-16, John Bright Street, Birmingham.

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INSURANCE

The outstanding event of the month has been the issue of the Report of the Committee appointed many months ago by the Home Secretary to inquire into Workmen's Compensation. There have for years been murmurs of discontent with the working of the Act, and opinions have been freely expressed on the iniquity of companies making such a large profit. Of course, much of this was due to the insatiable desire on the part of so many for State interference, and it should be particularly noted that in the terms of reference to the Committee the first point for consideration was the nationalization of Workmen's Compensation insurance. The question has been investigated with great thoroughness, and the Committee unanimously reject any such solution of the problem. But in these days when increasing bureaucratic interference is the panacea for all our ills, it was not likely that such a promising chance would be missed, and so many of the recommendations of the Committee are dependent on the appointment of a Commissioner and a Staff, at a cost not to exceed £30,000. What a long ladder all the pious estimates of the last few years would make! Individual notes attached to the report show a very proper scepticism in regard to the possibility of limiting the cost of a new department in advance. Our grandiose authorities, however, never worry about such a trifling matter as expense.

The Commissioner will have many duties, but the chief will be the control of rates. For the future the Companies are to be very decidedly "cabin'd, cribb'd, confin'd" in respect of profit, and the general principle on which the business will be conducted is, that of the revenue received by Companies, seventy per cent. is to go to the Insured in benefits, and the remaining thirty per cent. is to cover all commission charges, management expenses and profit; and as these have hitherto absorbed something like 50 per cent. or more, very drastic economy will be required if the business is not to be conducted actually at a loss. However, the arrangement was made in consultation with the Accident Office's Association, and a general agreement on the above lines has been arrived at. So it would appear that the Companies are satisfied they can still make a profit on the new lines; or they are prepared to risk a loss rather than see State insurance established. As the principle of compulsory insurance will be introduced, the field will be widened, and the income of the Companies should be increased. Certain wise provisions will be introduced so that all insurance organisations, whether limited companies or private associations, will have to provide substantial reserves to meet outstanding liabilities. Where compensation means so much to injured workmen, it is not right that premiums should be paid to associations which are not run on sound lines, and might not be able to continue payment of their liabilities; or that individual employers should shoulder all the liability themselves, and possibly by a visit to Carey Street, deprive the employee of compensation.

The compensation payable has twice been increased during the war by temporary additions, but the Committee proposes very decided changes and increases. These will, of course, have to be sanctioned by Act of Parliament, and in the present stage of suggestion it may not be worth while to enter into details. Experience has shown that the present flat rates leave much to be desired, and some degree of differentiation will meet with general approval in cases of death and total incapacity. But the increase of benefits naturally in case of positive incapacity increases the greatest danger in the whole system, that of malingering, and the scheme will need to be rounded off by the most stringent provisions in regard to this aspect of workmen's compensation. We know what to expect from this class of the community.

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THE CITY

Contrary to general anticipation, and one might say custom, the passing of the August Bank Holiday has not been succeeded by stagnation in the Stock Exchange. True, there has not been anything in the way of general activity, but investment business has continued in evidence, and in one or two of the more speculative sections there has been a fair and increasing inquiry. Home industrials have received a share of this attention. There is, for instance, a disposition to pick up some of the more popular textile securities, many of which are undoubtedly cheap. Iron and steel shares also are not without their admirers, and a point worth noting is the consistent firmness of the recent Vickers issue. The Armstrong debentures on the other hand, despite their excellence as an industrial security, continue out of favour. Their comparatively brief currency explains to some extent the popularity of the Vickers notes. Longer-dated industrial securities of the Armstrong class are necessarily handicapped at the present by inability to see very far ahead.

Although without conspicuous features, the gilt-edged market continues to give a good account of itself. The shake-out which markets generally experienced recently, was not without influence here. Speculative operations in this section have now to all intents and purposes ceased, for the very simple reason that prices, though for the most part lower than they should be, are now not sufficiently low to offer attraction to those who operate for a quick rise. Given freedom from adverse external influences (if such freedom be possible) this market will continue gradually to improve, as a result of normal investment business. This influence, however, will not be sufficient in volume to bring about the big and sudden appreciation in values for which the five-day speculator operates. Consequently he will be turning his attention elsewhere, and, in fact, is already doing so, witness the growing activity in Oil and Mining shares and the nibbling in even the Home Railway market.

In the gilt-edged market an exceptional opportunity for exchange is available for those who subscribed the Middlesex County 6% Bonds offered a few weeks back at 95 $\frac{1}{2}$. These are now quoted at 100, whereas the Coventry, Middlesbrough and South Shields Bonds also offered at 95 $\frac{1}{2}$, which went badly, can now be picked up at about 7/8 discount, that is 94 $\frac{1}{2}$. We have before referred to the uneconomic nature of these bonds, but they are, of course, a Trustee security, and excellent at that. To those who have no sentimental objection to a portion of the interest and redemption charges being drawn in the form of taxation from their fellow-sufferers' pockets, the attractions of the issues are obvious.

We referred recently to the growing disposition on the part of those usually considered astute to pick up in an unobtrusive fashion, some of the more popular—or, rather, less unpopular—Home Railway securities. This disposition is developing and certain indications seem to suggest that the market is about ripe for some recovery. Notwithstanding the popular outcry, the increase in fares and rates is now definitely decided upon. The investor pure and simple, who already holds, will probably content himself by awaiting events in the hope that, as a result of a speculative movement, he may ultimately see some of his money back. Speculators, on the other hand, seem at least to be assured of a fair run for their money.

While Oil shares generally are by no means suffering from neglect, the bulk of the business in this section is in Mexican Eagles. For these shares a big figure is still being predicted, and the progressive nature of the enterprise certainly supports the view. For 1919 a profit of £3,857,000 was earned, and a dividend of 45 per cent. was paid on both the Preference and Ordinary shares, the deliveries of the company during the year averaging about 35,000 barrels of oil daily. Now, however, considerably higher prices are being obtained for the product, while extensions are understood to be



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approaching completion which will permit the handling of 125,000 barrels daily.* Even these will be inadequate, for with the first three wells recently brought in on the Naranjos field, the ascertained daily production at date exceeds 400,000 barrels. These facts speak for themselves, and the optimism of the market seems justified.

Last week reference was made here to the readiness with which offerings of first class South African shares were absorbed by the controlling houses. With the passing of the holiday, business is steadily broadening, and it now really looks as though the shares will vie with Oil shares for pride of place in the matter of activity. A great stimulus is, of course, the increasing premium on gold, coupled with the reversion of the cable transfer exchange rate to normal. Consequent upon this dual influence, the mines are now earning very substantial profits; as, in fact, the first-class propositions were already doing when the price of the metal was appreciably below its present figure. There is significance in the market strength in face of the somewhat childish "every Sunday strike" of engine-drivers and firemen. Even the reported decision of 20,000 negroes in Madison Square Garden to order the English, French and Italians to "get out of Africa" has had no ill effects!

We have had many instances of late of negotiations for absorption and combination extending over lengthy periods. It has been characteristic of them, too, that shareholders have been kept more or less in the dark, while the share quotations have fluctuated wildly to the accompaniment of various, and often absurd, rumours. This being so the directors of Eastmans are to be congratulated upon the success with which their secret was kept, the promptness with which they took the shareholders of the company into their confidence, and the celerity with which the business was brought to a head. The offer of participation in the Union Cold Storage Co. is obviously an attractive one, and there is little doubt it will meet with general acceptance. The solatium to the directors, however, of 60,000 7 per cent. Preference shares of the Union Cold Storage seems to be on an unusually generous scale. What about the other officials of the company, who are to gain nothing more tangible than to remain "undisturbed on the terms of their existing engagements," which might mean anything?

Shareholders in the Commercial Bank of London cannot complain that their directors leave them in the dark. It is questionable, indeed, whether there is another industrial Bank the proprietors of which are so fully conversant with what is going on, both as regards the institution itself, and also its associated companies. The latest announcement by the bank has been issued with the warrants for the recently declared interim dividend for the current financial year. It is to the effect that further important transactions have been brought to a satisfactory conclusion within the past few weeks in addition to those dealt with by the chairman at the statutory meeting held in the spring, and that, as a result of these, the bank is now in possession of substantial revenue-producing assets which, together with those previously held, should, the announcement states, provide a permanent income sufficient to pay a satisfactory dividend on the whole of the bank's share capital, without taking into account profits from any future operations or the revenue from the general business of the bank.

As a rule, company meetings are of so stereotyped a character that few shareholders trouble to attend them—unless, of course, they have a bone to pick with the board. Of late, however, there have been several occasions on which items of outstanding interest have been reserved for disclosure at the annual gathering, and have been jealously guarded until the chairman's speech. A noteworthy case in point was provided recently when at the Shell meeting Sir Marcus Samuel made known his pending retirement from the chair. Then at the British North Borneo meeting the other

day Sir West Ridgeway announced a drastic change in the policy of this most conservative and soundly managed undertaking, an announcement to which reference was made here last week.

The latest instance is provided by the Hudson's Bay Company. The Chairman foreshadowed "considerable expansion" which might necessitate their seeking further capital powers. Further, on the subject of taxation, he pointed out that, through paying both Canadian and British taxes on the bulk of its business, the company is grievously handicapped, and it is likely that in order to obviate this, some at least of the departments will be turned into purely Canadian enterprises with a separate board of directors in Canada. This development will be acceptable to the shareholders, as it must be unpalatable to the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He has recently heard of two or three other companies, notably the Burma Corporation, which in spite of all temptation have, because of high taxation, refused to remain English.

New Egyptian shares rose smartly after Mr. Baumann's speech at the meeting last week and the carrying of the resolutions for the transfer of the control to the Egyptian Board. This is not surprising, considering the great advantages in relief of taxation that will accrue to the shareholders. The Egyptian shareholders, who are now about half the company, will pay no income-tax and no excess profits duty: the English shareholders will pay no excess profits duty. No wonder the shares rose promptly from 34s. to 39s.: but they are worth a great deal more than that. In the first half-year the company has sold 1,400 feddans at an average price of £202, and it is an open secret that an amalgamation is being discussed on the basis of £2 15s. per New Egyptian share. The Egyptians talk of the shares going to £3 or £4.

In connection with the establishment of new industries in this country on a secure basis, a forcible plea is contained in a circular letter, or manifesto, issued at the instance of the British Chemical Ware Manufacturers' Association, the British Lampblown Scientific Glassware Manufacturers' Association, and the British Laboratory Ware Association. The object of this letter is to emphasise the necessity for establishing safely in this country as "key industries" the manufacture of scientific, heat-resisting and chemical glassware, illuminating glassware and laboratory porcelain ware as distinct from ordinary domestic and fancy glassware. Before the war all these were manufactured almost exclusively in Central Europe, with the result that Great Britain found herself in 1914 in a most serious position, for without scientific glassware it is not possible to manufacture steel, for instance, of any definite quality, while, as the circular points out, "the dye industry is absolutely dependent upon the highest quality of laboratory ware, and it is even impossible to mine coal, work a ship or run a factory without special forms of illuminating glass."

Necessity being the mother of invention, or, in this case, of initiative, the production of these various essentials was taken in hand by British manufacturers during the war, and with such success that ultimately foreign products were not only equalled, but, in certain instances, distinctly improved upon. To-day, however, Central Europe is again coming into the field as a competitor, and Great Britain is seriously handicapped in a dual sense. First, by a shortage of labour skilled in the technique of manufacture, the remedy for which time alone can provide, and secondly, by installation costs, her competitors being equipped with factories and plant which were installed before the war at from a quarter to one-third of to-day's cost. In view of the heavy outlay already incurred and of future uncertainties, British manufacturers are naturally loth to launch out on the scale which less onerous conditions would justify. On the other hand, it must be admitted that this country cannot afford the risk of being again situated as in 1914.

The full Prospectus has been duly filed with the Registrar of Joint Stock Companies. The special permission of the Committee of the Stock Exchange for dealing in the shares after allotment will be applied for. The subscription List will open on the 5th day of August, 1920, and will close on or before the 11th day of August, 1920.

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